Who Burned Columbia?

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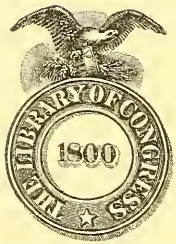

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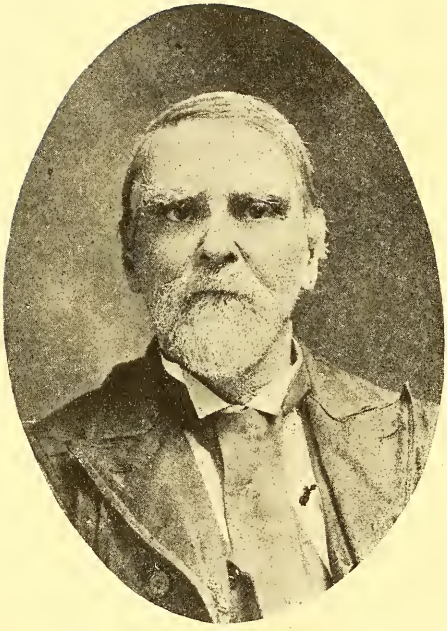

Col. James G. Gibbes.

Who Burnt Columbia?

BY

COL. JAMES G. GIBBES.

NEWBERRY S. C.
ELBERT H. AULL COMPANY.
1902.

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"Who Burnt Columbia?"

An article, written by me soon after the war, on the burning of Columbia, for the Philadelphia Times, having been recently republished, has caused such a number of requests to me to prepare a full and complete account of all the investigations and reports made about the matter, that I have decided to compile and publish the testimony that has been collected from reliable and undoubted sources. "Who Burnt Columbia," has never been a question in the mind of any person who was here. But the facts have not been generally made known.

While the old citizens know beyond a shadow of a doubt that the city was burnt wantonly by Sherman's Army, it has been the general belief that no orders for its destruction had been given, but that it was fully understood that the soldiers were to be allowed to do as they pleased, and that they were to be left under no restraint. A committee of the most respectable citizens of the place, with Hon. Chancellor J. P. Carroll, as chairman, investigated the matter fully, and showed by the sworn affidavits of sixty of her best citizens, what were the true facts.

Wm. Gilmore Sims, Dr. D. H. Trezevant, E. J. Scott, J. Wood Davidson, and many others have established the facts beyond a shadow of a doubt. Their testimony I have condensed as much as possible and with it give the testimony of Gen. Sherman, Gen. Howard, and other officers of the United States Army, and believe, after an impartial review of the whole, that no one will be left with any doubt as to who burnt Columbia.

JAS. G. GIBBES.

THE BURNING OF COLUMBIA.

A few years after the war Alex. McClure of the Philadelphia Times devoted the columns of his paper to the publication of matter of interest connected with the great struggle. It was at his request that I wrote the account of the Burning of Columbia, which is here republished, and in compliance with the request of many friends I add to it the official report of a committee of citizens of Columbia, who were appointed to investigate and report on the facts connected therewith. This article was published in the Philadelphia Times, September 20, 1880.

I also add important testimony taken from the accounts of a number of writers, all persons known for high character and undoubted veracity: Wm. Gilmore Simms, the distinguished author; Dr. D. H. Trezevant, one of the oldest and best known citizens and physicians; Edward J. Scott, and many others. I also add statements of Gen. Sherman himself, taken from his own memoirs; besides statements and admissions of Gen. Howard, 2nd in command, Gen. Stone, Col. Palmer, Gen. W. B. Hazen, Capt. Conyngham, Col. Nichols, and Maj. Gen. Hallack.

ACCOUNT OF JAMES G. GIBBES, PHILADELPHIA TIMES.

When Gen. Sherman reported that Columbia was either burned by Gen. Hampton or by accident, caused by the burning of cotton in the streets by the citizens, he presented the people of the North so-called facts; but over forty thousand eye-witnesses of the scene—one half of them his own soldiers—knew the facts to be very different indeed. As a witness of what took place on that fearful night, and with most of the scenes as vividly before me as if they had occurred but yesterday, I propose to give an account of it as it occurred. It was known about the 10th of February, 1865, that Sherman's army had passed across the Charleston and Savannah Railroad toward Branchville, a point equi-distant from Charleston, Augusta and Columbia, being sixty to sixty-five miles from each.

Opinion was divided as to its probable route from there. It was not believed that it would pass through Columbia until about Wednesday, February 15, and even then it was generally believed that it would not cross the Congaree River, but proceed up Broad River. On Thurs day, however, considerable skirmishing took place between the advance of the army and a few cavalry under Gen. Butler, between Congaree Creek and old Granby Point, three to five miles below Columbia. A few companies of cavalry composed the entire Confederate force at or near Columbia, but not sufficient to oppose the approach of the large army of Sherman. At this time I have no records or reports by which I could give the relative strength of the parties, but it was generally believed that Sherman had sixty thousand men, that one division had gone farther west, not far from Augusta, and that over forty thousand men were in the two divisions marching on Columbia. About twenty thousand, as well as I could estimate, crossed Saluda and Broad rivers and entered Columbia; another division, equally large, passed up Broad River, crossing thirty or forty miles above.

PILES OF TREASURE.

It should be noted that Columbia is situated on the east bank or side of Congaree river, which is formed by the junction of Saluda and Broad rivers, which unite just above the corporate limits of the city. As I stated, it became evident on Thursday that the army would enter Columbia, and as there were no troops to defend it steps were at once taken to remove government stores and such things of value as were possible. There were usually three banks located at Columbia, but on account of its being looked on as peculiarly safe from attack all of the banks of Charleston, and I believe all of those of the interior, with the exception, perhaps, of one, had removed to the city, making either fourteen or fifteen (I do not remember which) then in the place. Most of these banks, in addition to their ordinary assets, were crowded with immense special deposits in the way of boxes of silver plate, valuable papers, title deeds, bonds, etc., belonging to their customers and friends, many of whom were refugees from their homes and had en-

trusted their all to the banks for safe keeping. This fact will account for the immense losses that occurred from the fire and the pillage that preceded it, as these deposits were entirely too bulky to be removed at the last moment, when horses or vehicles of any kind could not be had at any price. On Thursday the railroad trains were moving everything that could be put on them—the Charlotte and Greenville roads sending off trains as fast as they could be loaded. The South Carolina or Charleston road had been cut below Columbia by the advance of Sherman, and was of no service in assisting in the exodus. The Confederate treasury department, large amounts of military stores and ammunition and commissary stores were removed. In addition to the railroads every horse, mule and ox was made available in removing families and valuables; but even then transportation was so limited that the banks were only able to remove their money and their books, leaving hundreds of tons of valuable deposits still in their vaults.

FRIDAY MORNING INCIDENTS.

Late on Thursday night I was with Gen. Beauregard, at his quarters at the United States Hotel, and found all arrangements complete for the evacuation of the city early Friday morning. In accordance with orders received, Gen. Beauregard turned over the command of the department to Gen. Hampton, whose whole command, if I am not mistaken, did not exceed eight hundred men. Capt. Witherspoon, chief commissary, gave me the keys of the different Confederate storehouses, and requested me to open them the first thing on Friday morning, and to distribute the stores among the citizens. While engaged at this about daylight on Friday morning, a terrible explosion was heard, which was afterwards found to have occurred in the depot of the South Carolina Railroad, from some unknown cause, killing several persons who were in the building at the time. Soon after this Gen. Sherman opened fire on the city from a battery that he erected in the night on a commanding hill just above the Congaree bridge, one mile west of the Capitol. This fire on the city was

begun without any notice and when no defence was intended or possible. Fortunately, no casualties occurred from it. Five shot struck the west wing of the Capitol, two of them breaking and shattering the pilasters and cornice around one of the windows. A few shot also struck and passed through the old State House, a wooden building. A piece of shell struck the residence of my father, on Plain street, and another piece fell into a buggy passing—the last vehicle, I believe, to leave the city—fortunately without injuring its occupant. One shot passed through the house of Capt. Matthews, on Arsenal Hill, shattering a large looking-glass while a young lady was standing before it. During Thursday night a picket guard, stationed at the long bridge over the Congaree, set fire to it, against orders, and it was entirely destroyed. That prevented Sherman from entering the city directly, but he passed up, crossed Saluda river near the Saluda factory—after firing it—then crossed Broad river, three miles above Columbia on a pontoon bridge. I find myself giving details somewhat foreign to the subject of the burning, but even at the risk of being tedious I find it necessary.

As soon as it was known that Sherman or a part of his army had crossed the river, the mayor, Dr. Goodwyn, and two or three of the aldermen, among whom, I believe, were Mr. John McKinzie, John Stork and O. Z. Bates, who are still residents of Columbia, went out to meet them. Dr. Goodwyn informed Col. Stone, who was in command of the advance, that the city was in no condition to make any defence and that he had come out for the purpose of making a formal surrender of it. After some conversation Col. Stone said: "Mr. Mayor, you can say to your people that they have nothing to be afraid of; that they are as safe as if there was not a Yankee within a thousand miles of them." After this assurance the mayor returned to the city. Col Stone afterwards, in reply to a question of Mr. Edward T. Scott, as to how private property would be protected, said, "*Fully! We are not savages;*" but later in the day, when asked by Mr. Scott for a guard to protect the Commercial Bank, he turned off, merely saying, "he had no time." This occurred about 10 o'clock A. M., Friday, February 17.

About 11 o'clock the army entered the city, marching down Main or Richardson street. On reaching the Courthouse and market the troops seemed to be all simultaneously disbanded and released from any restraint. The streets were soon all crowded with soldiers, but at first all seemed quiet and well disposed. About 1 o'clock an alarm of fire was given, and the fire bells rang. The writer hurried to the place of alarm and found about sixty bales of cotton had been rolled into the centre of Richardson street, in front of the store of O. Z. Bates, and was on fire. As I approached it I found a few men (citizens) had run out the Independent Engine from its house, near the market, not over one hundred yards from the burning cotton, and began playing on the fire. They soon extinguished it and continued playing on the smoking bales till all sign of fire was over. Not less than one thousand Federal soldiers were on the sidewalks and street looking on, but took no part at the fire until just as it was about all controlled, when a drunken soldier took his musket and plunged the bayonet into the hose pipe. Instantly a number of others joined in and with their bayonets soon cut the entire hose to pieces. The men working the engine remonstrated, but with no avail. They then ran the engine back into the enginehouse. Fortunately the fire was all over before this destruction of the hose, or the town might have been fired from it. Before 2 o'clock P. M. all sign of the fire was over.

SAVED BY STRATAGEM.

During the afternoon thirty bales of cotton, moved out into the street from his stable by Mr. J. H. Kinard, at the corner of Plain street, was burned; also, a few bales in Cottontown, not far from Mr. R. O'Neale's. These fires, however, were small affairs, and had no more to do with the burning of the city than they had with that of Chicago. About 3 P. M. large columns of smoke were seen east of the city, two to five miles off, which turned out to be the residences of Gen. Hampton, Dr. Wallace, George A. Trenholm, the cotton and card mill of the writer, and the houses of a number of other parties. About 2 to 3 P. M. the soldiers began breaking into the stores

and banks, and here the plunder and destruction of valuable property was beyond description. Thousands of boxes of valuables were stored in the bank vaults. I was passing the Bank of Charleston and the Commercial Bank of Columbia and found a squad of about fifty soldiers breaking them open and loading themselves with silver to the extent of their ability to carry. While looking on at this scene, a young man of Columbia came up with a Federal uniform coat on and with a large three-bushel bag, which he held open on the pavement as the soldiers came out with their loads. One of them told him to hold his bag open, mistaking him for one of his own comrades. Our disguised friend did so readily, and his bag was soon filled with all he could carry. After the evacuation this gentleman turned over to me, as the mayor of the city, this very silver, which I had the pleasure of restoring to the daughter of its former owner, (James L. Petigru,) Mrs. King, afterward Mrs. C. C. Bowen.

Every store in the city was sacked, as were the banks, but I knew of no serious attacks on residences that were occupied, except those in the outskirts of the city. The soldiers were generally civil and pleasant spoken, but there was a marked air of absence from all restraint and control, and the soldiers evidently knew that it was a general holiday, and that they were able to do as they pleased. About 7 P. M. signal rockets were thrown up from three several points, all in the northwest part of the city, in what was known as Cottontown. Very soon it was known what the signal reckets meant. The city was fired in several places at the same time. Just then a high wind sprung up, blowing from the northwest. This sent the flames with irresistible violence, sweeping all before it. The city was laid off in squares of four acres each, with streets one hundred feet wide. All of the stores were on one street—Richardson or Main street, as it was called. This street was closely built up for about one and a half miles. The buildings on the other streets were not so close, as most of the residences had large gardens and yards attached. Frequently the distance from one house to the next was too great for the flames to lap over and ignite the next; but, alas, that mattered not—

thousands of willing hands were ready to destroy what the elements were about to spare. Soldiers were seen on every side with every appliance for aiding the conflagration. Some had buckets of kerosene or turpentine, or other inflammable materials, and wherever a house was about to escape the fury of the burning storm it was immediately fired and made to share the general fate. With the exception of one small cottage house, occupied by Mr. Huchett, of Charleston, at the head of Main street, not a building was left on that street; everything on it was burned for one and a half miles and in a belt from a quarter to a half mile wide. Eighty-four squares, containing three hundred and sixty-six acres, and thirteen hundred houses were destroyed.

A FEARFUL NIGHT.

The fire continued throughout the night, the streets being crowded all the time with soldiers, but no officers were to be seen. I did see Gen. Sherman riding leisurely through the streets smoking a cigar, but he gave no orders and seemed to take little interest in what was going on. No one could witness the scene without the firm conviction that the burning of the city was a prearranged affair, or else that the soldiers were given to understand that they had free license to do as they pleased and that there would be no restraint over them. I spent almost the entire night in the streets and witnessed many houses fired by the soldiers, and I never saw (nor did I ever see any one who did) a single instance in which any assistance was rendered by the soldiers to save property from flames. It was a most fearful night—sublime in its grand awfulness. The illumination was more brilliant than I am able to describe. It seemed that the most minute things could be seen with wonderful distinctness at inconceivable distances. Not only the glare of the flames, but the millions of sparks and cinders that filled the air all helped to make an illumination that far surpassed the brightness of day. I am satisfied that, looking from the upper part of my house, I saw not less than eight hundred to one thousand men engaged in probing the ground with their bayonets or iron ramrods, searching

for buried treasures. In all directions it seemed equally bright. The storm of fire—I can call it nothing else—raged with unabated fury until daylight or a little later, when my attention was drawn to a number of cavalry, in squads of three or four together, galloping through the streets sounding their bugles and calling on the soldiers to fall into ranks. This was the first sign of any attempt at discipline or the issuing of any orders to the rank and file. I understood immediately that the worst was over, and so it was. The wind was still blowing severely, but I knew that, if unaided, the flames would soon die out.

At that time the track of fire was just in the rear of my own dwelling and approaching it so rapidly that all who were with me had abandoned it, and I had prepared to leave also, when I noticed the orders for falling into ranks. So satisfied was I that we were near the end that I returned to my house, and with the aid of a few of my servants succeeded in smothering the flames that were just starting in one of the outhouses, and saved the whole In less than thirty minutes after the orders were given every straggler was in ranks and the destruction virtually over. Nowhere was the discipline of Sherman's army more conspicuous than in the quick, prompt and immediate recognition of their orders to stop from any further destruction of the city. It seemed like magic. All was as quiet and as orderly as if the men were on dress parade where, but a moment before, it seemed as if to ruin and destroy was the only thing thought of. The ordinary population of Columbia did not exceed ten thousand, but owing to the large number of refugees from the coast there was at the time of the fire not less than twenty thousand persons, and of those not over five hundred men. I should have stated that General Hampton moved out with the few cavalry he had just as the Federal troops were entering the city. On Saturday morning squads of men were detailed for the destruction of what public property and buildings had escaped the night before. The gas works were then destroyed, the powder factory and several other public buildings. None were burned, but they were knocked to pieces or blown up.

AFTER THE CONFLAGRATION.

While this destruction was going on the Mayor, Dr. Goodwyn, came to me, broken down with fatigue and overwork. He said that he came to get me to aid and assist him. Finding this was the wish of the people generally, I consented and immediately proceeded to take steps to meet the difficulties we were in. The situation was serious. The usual population of the city was more than doubled by the refugees and visitors who were there, and these, too, almost entirely helpless women and children; thirteen hundred houses destroyed, which in number, was perhaps one-half of the city, but which from the location and character was really more than three-fourths of it. The city was greatly crowded before; now it would be impossible to find shelter for one-tenth of the homeless. The railroads were destroyed (that was done as soon as the city was occupied) there were no horses or conveyances of any kind to transport the people to a place of shelter, and every store and shop in the city destroyed, without a single exception. The entire stock of provisions on hand would scarcely support the people two days; in fact, there were no provisions at all, save the little in private families, and few of these had sufficient for more than two or three days. The country for miles around the city had been so thoroughly cleaned up that nothing whatever could be got from that quarter. The prospect of material aid from Gen. Sherman did not seem very bright. I thought that we had little to expect from one who, if he did not deliberately destroy the city by positive orders, did most certainly allow it to be done without making the slightest attempt or effort to save it. I would here repeat, in the strongest language possible, that during the whole of that terrible night not a single instance was known of a United States officer or soldier making an effort to stop the conflagration. I was glad to find, however, that I was mistaken. On Sunday I received a notification from the provost marshal, I think, that the chief commissary had been ordered by Gen. Sherman to turn over five hundred head of cattle for the use of the citizens. This was all that saved us from actual starvation—the cattle, owing to their peculiar condition (as I will explain hereafter) being

equivalent to more than double that number of ordinary beef cattle.

Among the incidents that passed under my own observation were some that it would not be out of place here to relate. Some things occurred that, notwithstanding the fearful condition of things, had their ludicrous side. As soon as the city was occupied on Friday guards were detailed and stationed at a number of the most prominent houses, I suppose with a view of giving their occupants a sort of feeling of guaranteed security. At the corner opposite my house lived a widow lady, Mrs. Herbamont; she had considerable silver plate and a lot of choice old wine that was quite valuable. She gave me her silver to try and save for her, which I did by throwing it down my well; but her wine she had buried in her garden, and felt quite secure of it. As soon as a guard was sent to her house she said to him: "Now, my good man, keep a good lookout and do not let any soldiers rob me. I have over a hundred bottles of fine old sherry wine buried under that fig tree in the garden, and you keep a good lookout for me and I will give you a bottle of it before you go." The consequence was just what might have been expected. The guard immediately hailed a squad from the street and piloting them to the fig tree unearthed the bottles, drank a few to the health and prosperity of Mrs. H——, took off what they could carry and broke up the remainder.

"WHAT TIME IS IT?"

Dr. Templeton, a prominent physician of the city, was walking in the street just after the destruction of his house, when he was accosted politely by a soldier and asked what time of night it was. Pulling out his watch to look, the soldier jerked it from him and walked off. Dr. Templeton coolly said: "Hold on, my good fellow, here is the key; it is not a bit of use to me without the watch." The soldier said: "All right, pass it along." The Doctor had not gone fifty yards before he was asked the time by another soldier. "Ah, my friend," said he, "you are just a little too late, one of your comrades was ahead of you."

I have mentioned the large number of soldiers who were engaged in probing the ground all over the city hunting for valuables that were buried. Immense quantities of silver, jewelry, money and other valuables were buried for safety, but the skill exhibited by the soldiers in finding it was truly wonderful. Bayonets and iron ramrods were used to probe the ground in all directions, and many a treasure was found and appropriated that its owner had thought safe and secure. A Mr. Mordecai, of Charleston, a refugee, who had been about a year in Columbia, had an old darkey that he loved to brag about as the only honest negro he had ever known. He would trust Peter with everything he had in the world. He had a large quantity of old family plate, (silver) so he buried it in his cellar—he and old Peter—not even letting his wife or children know where it was. As soon as the army marched into the city old Peter met the head of the column at the corner near his master's house, and calling four or five soldiers to go with him, marched straight to the cellar and showed them where to dig up the silver. In telling about it afterward, Mr. Mordecai seemed to be as much hurt by his being deceived by old Peter as he was by the loss of the silver.

On the morning after the fire I was passing the house of Dr. P. M. Cohen, a well-known druggist of Charleston, when I saw his grandchild, a little girl of four or five years of age, playing before his door with a small pet lap-dog. Two soldiers were passing, when one of them, for nothing but innate devilment, took the butt end of his musket and knocked out the brains of the little dog. The child began to cry piteously, when the other soldier, who was a kindhearted man, stopped and began to pet the little child, and taking out his knife he went to work with an old cigar box that was lying near and soon had a neat little coffin constructed and the child interested in the contemplated funeral. Just as he was about to begin to dig a grave to put the dog in under a large rose bush in the front garden, Dr. Cohen came out greatly excited and did all in his power to induce the soldier to dig the grave elsewhere, but all to no purpose. Fortunately, however, the interment was completed without the discovery of the Doctor's silver, which it

seems he had buried under the same bush, but luckily on the other side. Few were as fortunate.

SEARCHING FOR SILVER.

In passing where had been the house of Mr. James K. Friday, I saw two soldiers just taking up a large bag from a hole where it had been buried ; they took from it a large ice cream churn filled with silver, which Mr. Friday had endeavored to save in that way. I immediately walked up to the soldiers and told them that it belonged to a gentleman whose house was burning with all he had, and for God's sake to spare his silver. They asked me what I would give them for it. I had one $20 gold piece, all the money I owned of the kind. I took it out (at some risk) and offered them that, which they agreed to take for the silver if I would throw in a fine pocket knife which they saw I had. This I agreed to with the condition that they would take the churn, bag and contents to my house—which was quite near—as otherwise I might never have saved it. This they did in good faith, and a few days after I had the satisfaction of giving Mr. Friday a welcome surprise, as he had thought his silver had departed forever. About the time the soldiers entered the city an old colored woman, the nurse of my children, came to me and said : "Massa, if you got any money, gib it to me ; dem Yankees neber git it den." With the exception of the aforementioned gold piece, I had but $30 in specie, and that in silver, so I gave that to old Aunt Hannah, more to please her than from any other idea. On Monday morning, just after the evacuation of the city, old Hannah came to me with the silver, in high glee, but looking very haggard and worn. Some of my other servants told me that the old woman had not had a moment's rest while the Yankees were in the city ; that she put the silver in her bed and that she stood guard over it day and night, and had broken the head of one soldier with a pair of tongs who undertook to enter her room, and that he would have killed her had his comrades not interferred—thinking it a good joke, her attack on him. When last in Columbia,

twelve months ago, I met old Hannah and heard her lecture on "dem good ole times."

Early on Saturday morning, Mr. Jacob Lyons, the president of the gas company, came to me with the information that he had just been told that the gas works, which had not been burned the night before, were to be blown up, and urged me to see Gen. Sherman and try to save them. I at once went to the house where Gen. Sherman was quartered, but was refused admittance. I think, however, one of his staff, a Capt. Merritt, advised me to see Gen. Howard. So I went to him and urged him to give me an order for the protection of the gas works. Gen. Howard was very polite, but gave me little encouragement. Finally he promised to see Gen. Sherman himself on the subject, but confessed that my request would be hardly granted. He was very pleasant, and told me that, though what public buildings were left would be destroyed, he would have no hesitation in sparing anything that would conduce to the actual necessities of the people. That a flour mill or grist mill might be saved. I immediately urged him to give me an order for the protection of the mills that I thought of—one that of Dr. Geiger and the other of Fed W. Green ; the latter, however, had already been burned, but I succeeded in saving the venerable old establishment of Dr. Geiger, known in the early days of Columbia as Young's Mill. About two hours after I left Gen. Howard the gas works were destroyed.

PROTECTION AGAINST PLUNDERERS.

Late on Sunday night Dr. Goodwyn informed me that the cattle promised us would be turned over early the next morning, so I got my brother, Dr. R. W. Gibbes, to go to the commissary early in the morning and attend to having them delivered in the enclosure of the South Carolina College, that being the only place where they could be kept together, as there were twenty acres there enclosed by a brick wall. Knowing that when the army left there would likely be stragglers and plunderers in the rear who would treat us worse than the army did, I thought I would apply to Sherman for a few arms for our protection. I was, however, again unable to see him, so I

tried my old friend, Gen. Howard, again. Never shall I forget the astonished look he gave me when I explained that I wanted arms. However, I urged it so strongly on him that he at last gave me an order for one hundred muskets. I do not remember at this time on whom the order was, but I found it necessary to take it to Gen. Blair. He was much surprised, but filled the order, taking care, however, to give me a lot of worthless guns, scarcely one of which could be used. Nothing having been said about ammunition Gen. Blair did not care to furnish that, but finally gave me ten rounds or one thousand cartridges, which, perhaps, did not fit over a half dozen of the guns. These old muskets, however, did faithful service in guarding our city, and perhaps some of them are still in the city guardhouse.

About 6 A. M. on Monday morning a rumor got out that Gen. Hampton had attacked the advance of Sherman's army at Killian's mills, ten miles north of Columbia. That caused the hurried departure of the main body earlier than was intended, and no doubt was the reason of many doomed establishments being spared. As soon as the army departed, which was by 8 o'clock, my brother came and informed me he had five hundred and sixty head of cattle in the college enclosure, but that they were nothing but the refuse and broken-down portion, such as were not able to be driven any further; that no food could be procured for them, not even water, as the water-works were destroyed and it was impossible to drive them to the river. A meeting of some of the citizens was held and it was decided to butcher the cattle as fast as it could be done. One hundred barrels of salt were stored in the basement of the capitol. This embraced everything in the way of supplies that could be relied on to feed twenty thousand people. Twenty or thirty volunteers at once proceeded to butcher the cattle; and even killing them as rapidly as possible one hundred and sixty of the number died before they could be killed. During the privations of the war we had all got pretty well used to poor and tough beef, but I venture to say that such a lot of beef cattle as were given us by Gen. Sherman were never seen together before. An old shed at the corner of Plain

and Market streets, that had escaped the flames, was turned into a market or ration house, and for weeks that was the grand gathering place for the rich and poor. Here rations of tough beef and salt were given out. Those who were able to pay paid ; those who could not were supplied gratuitously ; but all were allowanced, and that to what was barely sufficient to feed their families, every one having to testify as to the number of mouths he had to fill.

SATISFYING MEAT.

What at first seemed to be a great misfortune—the character of the meat—actually turned out to be a great blessing. Had it been good, fat meat, it would have been, comparatively, a drop in the bucket toward supplying our necessities, but, fortunately, its quality compensated for its quantity, and I am certain that the survivors of that time will always preserve a lively recollection of the tough, blue sinews that like India rubber, the more you chewed it the larger it got. It was the most satisfying meat I ever saw—a little went a long way. Even with this wonderful beef and its enduring qualities it could not last 20,000 people long. I might here mention a fact, strictly true, that several hundred persons lived for fully two weeks after the evacuation solely and entirely on the loose corn picked up from the ground where the horses of the Yankee army were fed, and that, too, in a sprouting condition, the heavy rains having rotted it. Much privation and suffering ensued, and much more would had it not been for the noble conduct of Augusta as soon as our condition was known. The citizens of Augusta loaded six wagons with bacon, meal and flour and sent them over to us—making a present not only of the supplies, but also of the mules and wagons. This was a God-send to us. We found one section of country, Fort Motte, about forty miles from us, where some corn could be had, so for weeks these wagons were run backward and forward, hauling from that neighborhood. The crowd at Columbia in the meantime scattered as rapidly as possible, many going to Augusta, Newberry and other neighboring towns—walking being the only means of transportation. Some few ladies and children

got to ride occasionally in wagons. It was, however, fully three months before permanent relief was obtained from our troubles.

The Mother Superior of the convent had formerly educated Gen. Sherman's daughter, and it seems that she managed to hold some communication with him when he was in Savannah, and it was understood in Columbia that she had been informed by him, that if he did enter Columbia, that she had nothing to fear, that she would be protected. In consequence of this a number of persons went to the convent for safety and others sent their valuables there. The convent was burned early on Friday night. On Saturday morning the Mother Superior went to Sherman complaining, when he told her to choose any house in the place that had escaped and he would donate it to her. She at once moved to the large mansion of Gen. Preston, where Gen. Logan had his quarters. Gen. Sherman, as I afterward learned, actually executed titles to the property and gave them to her. She afterward surrendered them with the property to Gen. Preston. This incident was the means of saving that handsome edifice—now the residence of W. E. Dodge—as it would have been destroyed, as I was told by Gen. Logan, who also told me that it should be blown up, and that he only wished he had its owner there "to hang him as high as Haman."

VARIOUS INCIDENTS.

Early in the evening of Friday a Mrs. Boozer, who was living in a house belonging to me adjoining the Baptist church, came to me in great excitement and told me the city was to be burned. I told her no, that she need not be alarmed, and mentioned what Gen. Sherman had told Dr. Goodwyn. She said no, that she knew it would be burned. Her husband was a physician and at one time had charge of the hospital where some of the Federal officers (prisoners) had been located. Mrs. Boozer had shown kindness to some of them by furnishing them delicacies, etc., and as soon as the army entered Columbia two officers who had formally been there as prisoners and had been recipients of her kindness hunted her up and privately

informed her of the intention to fire the city. Even with this assurance I did not believe it, relying on the word of Gen. Sherman. These two officers, however, returned to Mrs. Boozer when the fire began and remained with her till the house was destroyed, and assisted her to move her young children to the asylum as a place of safety. This incident I mention to show that the destruction of Columbia was certainly pre-arranged. Mrs. Boozer is still living in Columbia and may be able to give the names of the officers alluded to.

About 2 o'clock on Friday night I went to the residence of my father, Dr. R. W. Gibbes, Sr. I found that his house, a large fire-proof one, had escaped, the fire having passed it; but on my entering it I found fifteen or twenty soldiers engaged in piling up furniture in the drawing room and were using the lace curtains to fire it from the gaslights. Every effort to induce them to desist was unavailing. A young man of an Iowa regiment had been placed at the house as a guard that morning. He had accidently fallen down the stone steps in front of the house and sprained his ankle. My father had bandaged it up for him and gave him some soothing lotion that relieved his pain, and lent him a pair of crutches that had been left in the house by my brother, Capt. Gibbes, who had been wounded not long before. This guard was apparently very grateful for the kindness shown him, and certainly did beg and urge his comrades not to burn the house; but they were not to be stayed, so he then urged my father to try and save some of his valuables. This he was urging when I entered the house. I suggested to my father to try and save a portion of his collection of coin. He had one of the largest private collections, perhaps, in the world of old and ancient coin, consisting of several thousand specimens of gold, silver and copper. I got the cover of the piano and we emptied the gold and silver coin on that, and made a bundle of it, and, at the suggestion of the guard, tied it around his neck as he stood by on his crutches. The copper coins were too heavy and bulky to try to move, so we abandoned them. By this time the house had been fired from the furniture piled up in the drawing room. So my father and I each took some articles of value in our hands and

followed the guard, who hobbled off into the street on his crutches, with the bag of coin around his neck. On reaching the corner he suddenly darted off among the crowd of soldiers that filled the street, and made such good time that neither he nor the coin have since been seen.

HIDDEN IN A MATTRESS.

Not less than one hundred and fifty ladies and children collected at my house during the night of the fire. As their residences were destroyed they came to my house for shelter. Suddenly one of the young ladies, the daughter of J. Daniel Pope, remembered that in the hurry of leaving their burning house they had forgotten to bring off their silver and jewelry that had been hiden in a moss matress in one of the upper rooms. It seemed a forlorn hope, but I determined to try and save it, the house not being very far distant. I hurried there and got into the house, which was burning rapidly; but in company with Summer, a faithful negro, who stuck to me, we got the mattress, but finding the stairway about to fall we cut the ticking open and took out what was in it, barely escaping before the house fell in. I afterward found that every article had been saved except one old watch.

There was one incident that I will mention, as it showed the forethought of a sharp woman who, in the time of trouble, looked ahead. There was a family of the name of Feaster living in a house just in the rear of the Courthouse that belonged to Col. Bauskett. Mr. Feaster was a very worthy, clever man, employed in the Confederate commissary storehouses, but he was principally known as the fourth husband of a quite noted woman, whom he married as Mrs. Boozer, formerly Mrs. Burton, formerly Mrs. Somebody else—a Philadelphia woman by birth. Mrs. Feaster had a daughter who had been adopted by her third husband, who had provided handsomely for her on condition that she took his name. So she was known as Miss Mary Boozer, and was considered one of the most beautiful girls ever seen in the State. The family were in but moderate circumstances, having lived very extravagantly. Mrs. Feaster was known as a very smart woman and not over-scrupulous.

While the city was on fire and the house she occupied was burning, Gen. Sherman passed by. She immediately made herself known to him as a Union woman and one who had done a great deal to assist Federal prisoners, and aided some to escape. She called his attention not only to her house, then burning, but showed him a large storehouse at the opposite corner, then burning, which she told him was her husband's, and that it had been filled with flour, bacon, tobacco and cotton, the truth being it was a government storehouse in which her husband was employed.

FOLLOWING THE ARMY

On Monday, when the army moved out, she managed to get Gen. Sherman to furnish her with two horses, which she hitched to her carriage, an old round-bodied affair, familiar to all the old residents, and started in company with the army. In the outskirts of the city, when passing the residence of Mrs. Elmore, she concluded a fair exchange was no robbery, so she left her old equipage and took in its place a fine carriage of Mrs. Elmore's. It was said that when passing Society Hill she, by mistake, loaded up and took off the family silver of the Witherspoons, a prominent family, at whose house she stopped, and who had put their silver in her room for safety. In December, 1865, when in New York, I received a note from Mrs. Feaster begging me to call and see her at the Astor House. On doing so I found her living in style, with a handsome suite of rooms and surrounded by a number of army officers. She was then working up her claim for loyalty and wanted me to give her a certificate as Mayor of Columbia that she was a widow. As I had seen Mr. Feaster but a few days previously in Columbia I was not able to help her, but I heard that she recovered $10,000 for her loyalty—Gen. Sherman having testified that he had witnessed the destruction of her property. Miss Boozer soon after married a wealthy merchant of New York, a Mr. Beecher, but it was not long before she left him, and, after a short and brilliant career in Europe, married a wealthy gentleman and now resides, I believe, in Baltimore. It has been stated that she and her younger sister were the

parties that were mixed up with the Crown Prince of Russia, a few years ago, and the loss of his mother's diamonds. She is now the Countess DePortales.

I find that were I to continue in describing the incidents of that eventful night that I would greatly lengthen what I, at first, intended as merely an account of the conflagration, so I will conclude; but must mention that I was present in the office of Governor Orr, some time in 1867, when Gen. Howard, then visiting Columbia, was there. Seeing Gen. Hampton across the street, I hailed him from the window, and when he entered Governor Orr introduced him to Gen. Howard. The first thing Gen. Hampton said was: "Gen. Howard, who burned Columbia?" Gen. Howard laughed and said: "Why, General, of course we did." But afterward qualified it by saying: "Do not understand me to say that it was done by orders."

FROM WILLIAM GILMORE SIMMS' ACCOUNT.

The distinguished author says of Sherman's march :

Day by day brought to the people of Columbia tidings of atrocities committed, and more extended progress. Daily did long trains of fugitives line the roads, with wives and children, and horses and stock and cattle, seeking refuge from the pursuers. Long lines of wagons covered the highways. Half naked people cowered from the winter under the bush tents in the thickets, under the eaves of the houses, under the railroad sheds, and in old cars left them along the route. All these repeated the same story of suffering, violence, poverty and nakedness. Habitation after habitation, village after village—one sending up its signal flames to the other, presaging for it the same fate—lighted the winter midnight sky with crimson horrors.

No language can describe nor can any catalogue furnish an adequate detail of the wide-spread destruction of the homes and property. Granaries were emptied, and where the grain was not carried off, it was strewn to waste under the feet of the cavalry or consigned to the fire which consumed the dwelling. The negroes were robbed equally with the whites of food and clothing. The roads were covered with butchered cattle, hogs, mules, and the costliest furniture. Valuable cabinets, rich pianos were not only hewn to pieces, but bottles of ink, turpentine, oil, whatever could efface or destroy, was employed to defile and ruin.

Horses were ridden into the houses. People were forced from their beds to permit the search after hidden treasures.

The beautiful homesteads of the parish country, with their wonderful tropical gardens, were ruined ; ancient dwellings of black cypress, one hundred years old. which had been reared by the fathers of the republic—men whose names were famous in the Revolutionary history—were given to the torch as recklessly as were the rude hovels ; choice pictures and works of art, from Europe, select and numerous libraries, objects of

peace wholly, were all destroyed. The inhabitants, black no less than white, were left to starve, compelled to feed only upon the garbage to be found in the abandoned camps of the soldiers. The corn scraped up from the spots where the horses fed, has been the only means of life left to the thousands, but lately in affluence.

And thus plundering, and burning, the troops made their way through a portion of Beaufort into Barnwell District, where they pursued the same game. The villages of Buford's Bridge, of Barnwell, Blackwell, Graham's, Bamberg, Midway, were more or less destroyed ; the inhabitants everywhere left homeless and without food. The horses and mules, all cattle and hogs, whenever fit for service or for food, were carried off, and the rest shot. Every implement of the workman or the farmer, tools, plows, hoes, gins, looms, wagons, vehicles, was made to feed the flames.

From Barnwell to Orangeburg and Lexington was the next progress, marked everywhere by the same sweeping destruction. Both of these court towns were burned.

These *tidings duly reached* the people of Columbia, and might have prepared them for the treatment they were destined to receive. Daily accessions of fugitives, bringing with them their valuables and provisions, made ample report of the progress of the Federal army. Hundreds of families had seasonably left long before, in anticipation of the danger. Columbia was naturally held to be one of the most secure places of refuge. It was never doubted that this capital city, which contained so many of the manufactures of the Confederate Government, the Treasury, etc., would be defended with all the concentrated vigor of which the Confederacy was capable, especially, too, as upon the several railroads connected with the city, the army of Lee and the safety of Richmond were absolutely dependent. Young women of family were sent in large numbers to a city where numbers seemed to promise a degree of security not to be hoped for in any obscure rural abode. The city was accordingly doubled in population, and here also was to be found an accumulation of wealth, in plate, jewels, pictures, books, manufactures of art and *virtu*, not

to be estimated--not, perhaps, to be paralleled in any other town of the Confederacy. In many instances the accumulations were those of a hundred years--of successive generations --in the hands of the oldest families of the South. A large proportion of the wealth of Charleston had been stored in the capital city, and the owners of these treasures, in many instances, were unable to effect any further remove. If apprehensive of the danger, they could only fold their hands, and, hoping against hope, pray for escape from a peril to which they could oppose no further vigilance or effort.

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Whatever hopes might have been entertained of the ultimate success of our defences, they were all dissipated, when, by daylight, on the 16th, (Thursday) the Confederate troops reentered the city, burning the several bridges over the Congaree, the Broad and Saluda rivers. They were quartered through the day about the streets, and along their several bivouacs they dug slight excavations in the earth as for rifle pits and for protection from the shells, which fell fast and thick about the town. The shelling commenced the evening before, and continued throughout the night and next day. No summons for surrender had been made ; no warning of any kind was given New batteries were in rapid progress of erection on the west side of the Congaree, the more effectually to press the work of destruction. The damage was comparatively slight. The new capitol building was struck five times, but suffered little or no injury. Numerous shells fell into the inhabited portion of the town, yet we hear of only two persons killed--one on the hospital square and another near the South Carolina Railroad depot.

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The inhabitants were startled at daylight, on Friday morning, by a heavy explosion. This was the South Carolina Railroad depot. It was accidentally blown up. Broken open by a band of plunderers, among whom were many females and negroes, their reckless greed precipitated their fate. This building had been made the receptacle of supplies from sundry

quarters, and was crowded with stores of merchants and planters, trunks of treasure, innumerable wares and goods of fugitives—all of great value. It appears that, among its contents, were some kegs of powder. The plunderers paid, and suddenly, the penalties of their crime. Using their lights freely and hurriedly, the better to *pick*, they fired a train of powder leading to the kegs. The explosion followed, and the number of persons destroyed is variously estimated, from seventeen to fifty. It is probable that not more than thirty-five suffered, but the actual number perishing is unascertained.

At an early hour on Friday, the commissary and quartermaster stores were thrown wide, the contents cast out into the streets and given to the people. The negroes especially loaded themselves with plunder. All this might have been saved, had the officers been duly warned by the military authorities of the probable issue of the struggle. Wheeler's cavalry also shared largely of this plunder, and several of them might be seen, bearing off huge bales upon their saddles.

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MAYOR'S OFFICE,
Columbia, S. C., February, 17, 1865.

"To Major-General Sherman: The Confederate forces have evacuated Columbia. I deem it my duty, as Mayor and representative of the city, to ask for its citizens the treatment accorded by the usages of civilized war-fare. I therefore respectfully request that you will send a sufficient guard in advance of the army, to maintain order in the city and protect the persons and property of the citizens.

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"T. J. GOODWYN, Mayor."

At 9 o'clock, on the painfully memorable morning of the 17th February, (Friday) a deputation from the City Council, consisting of the Mayor, Aldermen McKenzie, Bates and Stork, in a carriage bearing a white flag, proceeded to the Broad River bridge road. * * * * The deputation met the column of the Federals, under Captain Platt, who sent them forward to Colo-

nel Stone, who finally took his seat with them in the carriage. The advance belonged to the 15th corps.

The Mayor reports that on surrendering the city to Colonel Stone, the latter assured him of the safety of the citizens and of the protection of their property, *while under his command.* He could not answer for General Sherman, who was in the rear, but he expressed the conviction that he would fully confirm the assurances which he (Colonel Stone) had given. Subsequently, General Sherman did confirm them, and that night, seeing that the Mayor was exhausted by his labors of the day, he counseled him to retire to rest, saying, "Not a finger's breadth, Mr. Mayor, of your city shall be harmed. You may lie down to sleep, satisfied that your town shall be as safe in my hands as if wholly in your own." Such was very nearly the language in which he spoke; such was the substance of it. He added: "It will become my duty to destroy some of the public Government buildings; but I will reserve this performance to another day. It shall be done tomorrow, provided the day be calm." And the Mayor retired with this solemnly asserted and repeated assurance.

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Hardly had the troops reached the head of Main street, when the work of pillage was begun. Stores were broken open within the first hour after their arrival, and gold, silver, jewels and liquors, eagerly sought. The authorities, officers, soldiers, all, seemed to consider it a matter of course. And woe to him who carried a watch with gold pendant; or who wore a choice hat, or overcoat, or boots or shoes. He was stripped in the twinkling of an eye. It is computed that, from first to last, twelve hundred watches were transferred from the pockets of their owners to those of the soldiers. Purses shared the same fate; nor was the Confederate currency repudiated. But all these things hereafter, in more detail.

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And here it may be well to mention, as suggestive of many clues, an incident which presented a sad commentary on that confidence in the security of the Convent, which was enter-

tained by the great portion of the people. This establishment, under the charge of the sister of the Right Rev. Bishop Lynch, was at once a convent and an academy of the highest class. Hither were sent for education the daughters of the Protestants, of the most wealthy classes throughout the State; and these, with the nuns and those young ladies sent thither on the emergency, probably exceeding one hundred. The Lady Superior entertained the fullest confidence in the immunities of the establishment. But her confidence was clouded, after she had enjoyed a conference with a certain major of the Yankee army, who described himself as an editor, from Detroit. He visited her at an early day, and announced his friendly sympathies with the Lady Superior and the sisterhood; professed his anxiety for their safety—his purpose to do all that he could to insure it—declared that he would instantly go to Sherman and secure a chosen guard; and, altogether, made such professions of love and service, as to disarm these suspicions, which his bad looks and bad manners, inflated speech and pompous carriage, might otherwise have provoked. The Lady Superior, with such a charge in her hands, was naturally glad to welcome all shows and prospects of support, and expressed her gratitude. He disappeared, and soon after re-appeared, bringing with him no less than eight or ten men—none of them—as he admitted, being Catholics. He had some specious argument to show that, perhaps, her guard had better be one of the Protestants. This suggestion staggered the lady a little, but he seemed to convey a more potent reason, when he added, in a whisper: "*For I must tell you, my sister, that Columbia is a doomed city!*" Terrible doom! This officer leaving his men behind him, disappeared, to show himself no more. The guards so left behind were finally among the most busy as plunderers. The moment that the inmates driven out by fire, were forced to abandon their house, they began to revel in its contents.

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It may be well to remark that the discipline of the soldiers, upon their first entry into the city, was perfect and most admirable. There was no disorder or irregularity on the line

of march, showing that their officers had them completely in hand. They were a fine looking body of men, mostly young and of vigorous formation, well clad and well shod, seemingly wanting in nothing. Their arms and accoutrements were in bright order. The negroes accompanying them were not numerous, and seemed mostly to act as drudges and body servants. They groomed horses, waited, carried burdens, and, in almost every instance under our eyes, appeared in a purely servile, and not a military, capacity. The men of the West treated them generally with scorn or indifference, sometimes harshly, and not unfrequently with blows.

But, if the entrance into town and while on duty, was indicative of admirable drill and discipline, such ceased to be the case the moment the troops were dismissed. Then, whether by tacit permission or direct command, their whole deportment underwent a sudden and rapid change. The saturnalia soon began. We have shown that the robbery of the persons of the citizens and the plunder of their homes commenced within one hour after they had reached the Market Hall. It continued without interruption throughout the day. Sherman, at the head of his cavalry, traversed the streets everywhere—so did his officers. Subsequently, these officers were everywhere on foot, yet beheld nothing which required the interposition of authority. And yet robbery was going on at every corner—in nearly every house. Citizens generally applied for a guard at their several houses, and, for a time, these guards were allotted them. These might be faithful or not. In some cases, as already stated, they were, and civil and respectful; considerate of the claims of women, and never trespassing upon the privacy of the family; but, in numbers of cases, they were intrusive, insulting and treacherous—leaving no privacy undisturbed, passing without a word into the chambers and prying into every crevice and corner.

But the reign of terror did not fairly begin till night. In some instances, where parties complained of the misrule and robbery, their guards said to them, with a chuckle: "This is nothing. Wait till tonight, and you'll see h-ll."

Among the first fires at evening was one about dark, which

broke out in a filthy purlieu of low houses, of wood, on Gervais street, occupied mostly as brothels. Almost at the same time a body of soldiers scattered over the Eastern outskirts of the city, fired severally the dwellings of Mr. Secretary Trenholm, General Wade Hampton, Dr. John Wallace, J. U. Adams, Mrs. Starke, Mr. Latta, Mrs. English, and many others. There were then some twenty fires in full blast, in as many different quarters, and while the alarm sounded from these quarters, a similar alarm was sent up almost simultaneously from Cotton Town, the northermost limit of the city, and from Main street in its very centre, at the several stores or houses of O. Z. Bates, C. D. Eberhardt, and some others in the heart of the most densely settled portion of the town: thus enveloping in flames almost every section of the devoted city. At this period, thus early in the evening, there were few shows of that drunkenness which prevailed at a late hour in the night, and only after all the grocery shops on Main street had been rifled. The men engaged in this were well prepared with all the appliances essential to their work. They did not need the torch. They carried with them, from house to house, pots and vessels containing combustible liquids, composed probably of phosphorous and other similar agents, turpentine, etc., and with balls of cotton saturated in this liquid, with which they also overspread the floors and walls, they conveyed the flames with wonderful rapidity from dwelling to dwelling. Each had his ready box of Lucifer matches, and, with a scrape upon the walls, the flames began to rage. Where houses were closely contiguous, a brand from one was the means of conveying destruction to the other.

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Throughout the whole of this terrible scene the soldiers continued their search after spoil. The houses were severally and soon gutted of their contents. Hundreds of iron safes, warranted "impenetrable to fire and the burglar," it was soon satisfactorily demonstrated, were not "Yankee proof." They were split open and robbed, yielding, in some cases, very largely of Confederate money and bonds, if not of gold and silver. Jewelry and plate in abundance was found. Men could be

seen staggering off with huge waiters, vases, candelabra, to say nothing of cups, goblets and smaller vessels, all of solid silver. Clothes and shoes, when new, were appropriated—the rest left to burn. Liquors were drank with such avidity as to astonish the veteran Bacchanals of Columbia ; nor did the parties thus distinguishing themselves hesitate about the vintage. There was no idle discrimination in the matter of taste, from the vulgar liquor, which Judge Burke used to say always provoked within him "an inordinate propensity to sthale," to the choicest red wines of the ancient cellars. In one vault on Main street, seventeen casks of wine were stored away, which, an eyewitness tells us, barely sufficed, once broken into, for the draughts of a single hour—such were the appetites at work and the numbers in possession of them. Rye, corn, claret and Maderia all found their way into the same channels, and we are not to wonder, when told that no less than one hundred and fifty of the drunken creatures perished miserably among the flames kindled by their own comrades, and from which they were unable to escape. The estimate will not be thought extravagant by those who saw the condition of hundreds after 1 o'clock A. M. By others, however, the estimate is reduced to thirty ; but the number will never be known. Sherman's officers themselves are reported to have said that they lost more men in the sack and burning of the city (including certain explosions) than in all their fights while approaching it. It is also suggested that the orders which Sherman issued at daylight, on Saturday morning, for the arrest of the fire, were issued in consequence of the loss of men which he had thus sustained.

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A certain Yankee officer happened to hear that an old acquaintance of his, whom he had known intimately at West Point and Louisiana, was residing in Columbia. He went to see him after the fire, and ascertained that his losses had been very heavy, exceeding two hundred thousand dollars. The parties had not separated for an hour, when a messenger came from the Yankee, bringing a box, which contained one hundred thousand dollars in Confederate notes. This, the Yankee

begged his Southern friend to accept, as helping to make up his losses. The latter declined the gift, not being altogether satisfied in conscience with regard to it. In many cases Confederate money by the handfull was bestowed by the officers and soldiers upon parties from whom they had robbed the last particle of clothing, and even General Sherman could give to parties, whom he knew, the flour and bacon which had been taken from starving widows and orphans. So he left with the people of Columbia a hundred old muskets for their protection, while emptying their arsenals of a choice collection of beautiful Enfield rifles. And so the starving citizens of Columbia owe to him a few hundred starving cattle, which he had taken from the starving people of Beaufort, Barnwell, Orangeburg and Lexington--cattle without food, and for which food could not be found, and dying of exhaustion at the rate of fifteen to twenty head per diem.

In this connection and this section, in which we need to devote so much of our space to the cruel treatment of our women, we think it proper to include a communication from the venerable Dr. Sill, one of the most esteemed and well-known citizens of Columbia. It is from his own pen, and the facts occurred under his own eyes. We give this as one of a thousand like cases, witnessed by a thousand eyes, and taking place at the same time in every quarter of the city, almost from the hour of the arrival of the army to that of its departure. He writes as follows:

"On Thursday, the day before the evacuation of the city by the Confederate forces, I invited a very poor French lady, (Madame Pelletier) with her child, refugees from Charleston, to take shelter in my house, where they might, at least, have such protection as I could give her, shelter and food for herself and child. She was poor, indeed, having very little clothing, and only one or two implements--a sewing machine and a crimping apparatus--by means of which she obtained a precarious support. My own family (happily) and servants being all absent, and being myself wholly incapacitated by years of sickness from making any exertion, all that the poor widow woman and myself could remove from my house, besides the

few things of hers, consisted of two bags of flour, a peck of meal, and about the same of grist, and about thirty pounds of bacon and a little sugar. These few things we managed to get out of the house, and, by the aid of a wheelbarrow, removed about fifty yards from the burning buildings. Waiting then and there, waiting anxiously the progress and the direction of the fire, we soon found that we had been robbed of one bag of flour and a trunk of valuable books of account and papers. The fire continuing to advace on us, we found it necessary to remove again. About this time there came up a stalwart soldier about six feet high, accoutred with pistols, bowie-knife, etc., and stooping down over the remaining bag of flour, demanded of the poor French lady what the bag contained. Having lost, but a few moments before, almost everything she had in the way of provisions, she seemed most deeply and keenly alive to her destitute situation, in the event she should lose the remain ing bag of flour; the last and only hope of escape from starvation of her child and herself. She fell upon her knees, with hands uplifted, in a supplicating manner, and most piteously and imploringly set forth her situation—an appeal which, under the circumstances, it would be impossible to conceive, more touching or heart-rending. She told him she was not here of her own choice; that herself and husband had come to Charleston in 1860 to better their fortunes; that they had been domiciled in New Jersey, where her husband had taken the necessary steps to become a citizen of the United States. She had in her hand papers vouching the truth of her statement; that her husband had died of yellow fever in Charleston; that being unable, from want of the means, to return to New Jersey, she had been driven from Charleston to Columbia, (a refugee, flying from the enemy's shells,) to try to make an honest support for herself and child. To all this, he not only turned a deaf ear, but deliberately drew from his breast a huge shining bowie-knife, brandished it in her face, rudely pushed her aside, using, at the same time, the most menacing and obscene language; shouldered the bag of flour, and started off, leaving the poor starving creature, with her helpless child, overwhelmed with grief and despair. E. SILL."

We have averted to the outrages which were perpetrated within the households of the citizens, and which were unrestrained by the rebuking eyes of their own comrades, and unresisted by their interposition, cupidity, malignity, and lust sought to glut their several appetites. The cupidity generally triumphed over the lust. The greed for gold and silver swallowed up the more animal passions, and drunkenness supervened in season for the safety of many.

We have heard of some few outrages, or attempts at outrage, of the worst sort, but the instances, in the case of white females, must have been very few. There was perhaps, a wholesome dread of goading to desperation the people whom they had despoiled of all but honor. They could see in many watchful and guardian eyes, the lurking expression which threatened sharp vengeance, should their trespasses proceed to those extremes which they yet unquestionably contemplated.

The venerable Mr. H—— stood ready, with his *conteau de chasse*, made bare in his bosom, hovering around the persons of his innocent daughters. Mr. O——, on beholding some familiar approach to one of his daughters, bade the man stand off at the peril of his life; saying that while he submitted to being robbed of property, he would sacrifice life without reserve —his own and that of the assailant—before his child's honor should be abused.

Mr. James G. Gibbes, with difficulty, pistol in hand, and only with the assistance of a Yankee officer, rescued two young women from the clutches of as many ruffians.

We have been told of successful outrages of this unmentionable character being practiced upon women dwelling in the suburbs. Many are understood to have taken place in remote country settlements, and two cases are described where young negresses were brutally forced by the wretches and afterwards murdered—one of them being thrust, when half dead, head down, into a mud puddle, and there held until she was suffocated. But this must suffice.

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The destruction of private libraries and valuable collections of objects of art and *virtu*, was very large in Columbia. It

was at the urgent entreaties of the Rev. Mr. Porter, the professors and others, that the safety of the South Carolina College library was assured. The buildings were occupied by Confederate hospitals, where some three hundred invalids and convalescents found harborage.

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Libraries of ten thousand volumes—books such as cannot again be procured—were sacrificed. It will suffice to illustrate the numerous losses of this sort in Columbia, to report the fate of the fine collections of Dr. R. W. Gibbes. This gentleman, a man of letters and science, *a virtuoso*, busied all his life in the accumulation of works of art and literature, and rare objects of interest to the amateur and student, had been long known to the American world, North and South, in the character of a *savant*. Perhaps no other person in South Carolina had more distinguished himself by his scientific writings, and by the indefatigable research which illustrated them, by the accumulation of proofs from the natural world. A friendly correspondent gives us a mournful narrative of the disasters to his house, his home, his manuscripts and his various and valuable collections, from which we condense the following particulars:

"Besides the fine mansion of Dr. Gibbes, and its usual contents of furniture, his real estate on Main street, etc., his scientific collections and paintings were of immense value, occasioning more regret than could arise from any loss of mere property. His gallery contained upwards of *two hundred paintings*, among which were pictures by Washington Allston, Sully, Inman, Charles Fraser and DeVeaux; and many originals and copies by European hands, were highly prized from their intrinsic excellence and interesting associations. The family portraits in the collection were also numerous—some ancient, all valuable, and several admirable busts graced his drawing room. His portfolios contained collections of the best engravings, from the most famous pictures of the old masters and by the most excellent engravers of the age. These were mostly a bequest from the venerable C. Fraser, who was one of those who best knew what a good engraving or picture should be,

and who had, all his life, been engaged in accumulating the most valuable illustrations of the progress of art. Nor was the library of Dr. Gibbes less rich in stores of letters and science, art and medicine. His historical collection was particularly rich, especially in American and South Carolina history. His cabinet of Southern fossils and memorials, along with those brought from the remotest regions, was equally select and extensive. It contained no less than ten thousand specimens. The collection of shark's teeth was pronounced by Agassiz to be the finest in the world. His collection of historical documents, original correspondence of the Revolution, especially that of South Carolina, was exceedingly large and valuable. From these he had compiled and edited three volumes, and had there arrested the publication, in order to transfer his *material* to the Historical Society of South Carolina. All are now lost. So, also, was his collection of autographs—the letters of eminent correspondents in every department of letters, science and art. Many relics of our aborigines, others from the pyramids and tombs of Egypt, of Herculaneum, Pompeii and Mexico, with numerous memorials from the Revolutionary and recent battlefields of our country, shared the same fate—are gone down to the same abyss of ruin. The records of the Surgeon-General's Department of the State, from its organization, no longer exist. The dwelling which contained these inestimable treasures was deliberately fired by men, for whose excuse no whiskey influence could be pleaded. They were quite as sober as in a thousand other cases where they sped with the torch of the incendiary. It was fired in the owner's presence, and when he expostulated with them, he was laughed to scorn. A friend who sought to extinguish the fire kindled in his very parlor, was seized by the collar and hurled aside, with the ejaculation, "Let the d–d house burn."

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Escorting a sad procession of fugitives from the burning dwellings, one of the soldiers said:

"What a glorious sight!"

"Terribly so," said one of the ladies.

"Grand!" said he.

"Very pitiful," was the reply.

The lady added:

"How, as men, you can behold the horrors of this scene, and behold the sufferings of these innocents, without terrible pangs of self-condemnation and self-loathing, it is difficult to conceive."

"We glory in it!" was the answer. "I tell you, madam, that when the people of the North hear of the vengeance we have meted out to your city, there will be a universal shout of rejoicing from man, woman and child, from Maine to Maryland."

"You are, then, sir, only a fitting representative of your people."

Another, who had forced himself as an escort upon a party, on the morning of Saturday, said, pointing to the thousand stacks of chimneys, "You are a curious people in house-building. You run up your chimneys before you build the house."

One who had been similarly impudent, said to a mother, who was bearing a child in her arms:

"Let me carry the baby, madam."

"Do not touch him for your life," was the reply. "I would sooner hurl him into the flames and plunge in after him than that he should be polluted by your touch. Nor shall a child of mine ever have even the show of obligation to a Yankee!"

"Well, that's going it strong, by—; but I like your pluck. We like it d–e; and you'll see us coming back after the war—every man of us—to get a Carolina wife. We hate your men like h—l, but we love your women!"

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The morning of Saturday, the 18th of February, opened still with its horrors and terrors, though somewhat diminished in their intensity. A lady said to an officer at her house, somewhere about 4 o'clock that morning:

"In the name of God, sir, when is this work of hell to be ended?"

He replied: "You will hear the bugles at sunrise, when a guard will enter the town and withdraw these troops. It will then cease, and not before."

Sure enough, with the bugle's sound, and the entrance of fresh bodies of troops, there was an instantaneous arrest of incendiarism. You could see the rioters carried off in groups and squads, from the several precincts they had ravaged, and those which they still meditated to destroy.

The tap of the drum, the sound of the signal cannon, could not have been more decisive in its effect, more prompt and complete. But two fires were *set*, among private dwellings, after sunrise ; and the flames only went up from a few places, where the fire had been last applied ; and these were rapidly expiring.

The best and most beautiful portion of Columbia lay in ruins. Never was ruin more complete ; and the sun rose with a wan countenance, peering dimly through the dense vapors which seemed wholly to overspread the firmament. Very miserable was the spectacle. On every side ruins, and smoking masses of blackened walls, and towers of grim, ghastly chimneys, and between, in desolate groups, reclining on mattress, or bed, or earth, were wretched women and children, gazing vacantly on the site of a once blessed abode of home and innocence.

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Several instances have been given us of their modes of repelling the association of the negro, usually with blow of the fist, butt of the musket, slash of the sword, or prick of the bayonet.

Sherman looked on these things indifferently, if we are to reason for a single fact afforded us by Mayor Goodwyn. These gentlemen, while walking with the General, heard the report of a gun. Both heard it, and immediately proceeded to the spot. There they found a group of soldiers, with a stalwart young negro fellow lying dead before them on the street, the body yet warm and bleeding. Pushing it with his feet, Sherman said, in his quick, hasty manner :

"What does this mean, boys ? "

The reply was sufficiently cool and careless. "The d--d black rascal gave us his impudence, and we shot him."

"Well, bury him at once ! Get him out of sight ! "

As they passed on, one of the party remarked :

"Is that the way, General, you treat such a case?"

"Oh!" said he, "we have no time now for courts-martial and things of that sort!"

A lady showed us a coverlet, with huge holes burned in it, which she said had covered a sleeping negro woman, when the Yankees, threw their torches into her bed, from which she was narrowly extricated with life.

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We should not overlook the ravages and destruction in the immediate precincts of the city, though beyond its corporate boundaries. Within a few miles of Columbia, from two to five miles, it was girdled by beautiful country seats, such as those of the Hampton family—Millwood—a place famous of yore for its charms and elegance of society, its frank hospitality and the lavish bounty of its successive hosts. The destruction of this family seat of opulence, and grace, and hospitality, will occasion sensation in European countries, no less than in our own, among those who have enjoyed its grateful privileges, as guest, in better days.

The beautiful country seat of Mr. Secretary Trenholm, Dr. John Wallace, Mrs. Thomas Stark, Col. Thomas Taylor, Capt. James U. Adams, Mr. C. P. Pelham, (Mill Creek,) as well as homestead—and many more—all shared the fate of Millwood—all were robbed and ruined, then given to the flames; and from these places were carried off all horses, mules, cattle, hogs, and stock of every sort; and the provisions not carried off, were destroyed.

In many cases, where mules and horses were not choice, they were shot down. But this was the common history. On all the farms and plantations, and along the roadsides everywhere, for many a mile, horses, mules and cattle, strew the face of the country. Young colts, however fine the stock, had their throats cut. One informant tells us that in one pile he counted forty slain mules on the banks of the Saluda. Every vehicle which could not be carried away was destroyed.

A list of residences and stores destroyed in the city of Columbia on Monday night, 17th of February, 1865, was 1,386.

EXTRACTS FROM MR. E. J. SCOTT'S BOOK.

E. J. Scott, one of the oldest and most respectable citizens of Columbia, has written about Sherman's entrauce. From his book I quote as follows :

Friday, October 17th, about 9 o'clock Gen. Hampton directed Mayor Goodwin to surrender, and before 10 o'clock a company of Wheeler's cavalry passed down Main street ordering all soldiers to leave it as the enemy were coming in. About that hour a carriage displaying the United States flag, with an officer or two and the Mayor, drove rapidly down to the market, where I went and saw Col. Stone, who had received the surrender, with Alderman McKenzie, Bates and a few citizens. Mr. McKenzie informed me that the surrender was unconditional, and then I asked the Colonel : "Will private property be respected in the city ?" He seemed indignant at the question, and replied : "Private property *will* be respected ; we are not savages. If you let us alone, we will let you alone." He was a handsome young officer, who looked and spoke like a gentleman, and I believed him. These assurances he repeated to others in my presence. I thanked him, and, returning to the bank, informed Henry's wife that I thought she could remain there in safety till evening, when I would take her to my house. As the carriage passed she became frantic with excitement, and declared her purpose to wave a Confederate banner from the window, which I prevented her from trying to do. On my way home I saw some of the first troops that marched in leave their ranks and break open Mordecai's and Heise's liquor shops with axes. While I was stopping at the engine house, next above the Market, one of them came across the street, followed by a negro, and demanded admittance into J. C. Walker's store, whereupon Walker handed him the key of the front door, and he and the negro went in. Just then some of them were trying to force the front door to James G Gibbes' store, where McKenzie's confectionery now is, and in a minute or two the side door, next to the Court House, was

broken open and the negroes and soldiers streamed in and helped themselves.

While going down Main street to Janney's, towards 12 o'clock, Gen. Sherman and his staff rode up. The soldiers were then breaking open and robbing the stores within his sight and hearing. After dinner I went back to the bank with a negro to bring some of Henry's things to my house. Large bodies of troops were marching down Main street, and a soldier with several negroes was in Henry's rooms.

Hampton's house, on Camden road, and Authur's, in the suburbs, were burnt before night. Just after dark Puryear's, at race track, and Dr. John Wallace's were on fire. The Charlotte railroad track, in sight from my back door, was also burning. I went to bed with my clothes on, and about 10 o'clock I heard fowls in the yard squalling and men catching them. The light of the fire grew brighter towards Main street, and after getting up two or three times to look at it I had gone to sleep, when at 2 o'clock my old negro, Quash, woke me at the back door, saying Mrs. Zimmerman, next door, was moving out her furniture and I must get up, as the orders were to burn every house. All rose, and, by my directions, put on all the clothes they could and made bundles of what they could carry.

The streets, lit up as bright as day, were occupied by men, women and children, standing or sitting by such household goods, furniture, clothing, and bedding as they had saved from their burning houses. The wind showed no sign of abating, but it gradually changed and came from the northeast, blowing back upon the fire and saving my premises. I went to Mr. Dovillier's and helped his wife put two or three big pictures in frames on her head, which she carried over to my house, and thence beyond the Female College, where her husband and his mother were in the street. Whilst there Pelham's house, just opposite, took fire, and with Dr. William Reynolds, Jr., I carried water from Dovillier's well to put it out. Mike Brennan, in Pelham's door, called on three or four soldiers in the street to assist in saving the building, but one of them said, "d--n the house, let it burn;" and they did

nothing. It burnt, and Sam Muldrow's next door. There the fire stopped in our street. On the way to Dovillier's I met a Yankee soldier, who accosted me with the question, "Well, old man, what do you think of the Yankees now?" I replied, "I think they have done their work pretty thoroughly this time," and he rejoined, with an oath, "Yes, if you want a job well done put a Yankee at it."

The Methodist church, on Washington street, was set on fire three times before its destruction was completed. Mr. Connor, the clergyman in charge, who lived in the parsonage adjoining, having twice put out the fire. When they burnt the parsonage he brought out a sick child wrapped in a blanket, and one of the soldiers seizing the blanket, he begged that it might be spared because of the child's sickness. The brute tore it off and threw it into the flames, saying, "D–n you. if you say a word I'll throw the child after it."

Sunday, February 19. This morning Mayor Goodwyn, Rev. Mr. Talley, Wm. M. Martin, and several other citizens and myself called on Gen. Howard to see what provision could be made to feed and protect the people till supplies could be got from abroad. He proceeded with us to see Gen. Sherman on Gervais street at Blanton Duncan's house. He received us very courteously indeed, seeming to be on particularly good terms with himself. No peacock ever manifested more vanity and delight than he did when addressing us, he said, "Gentlemen what can I do for you. You ought to be at church." Mayor Goodwyn stated our condition with 20,000 old men, women and children having no provisions or means of defense, and requested a supply of arms and ammunition, with food enough to keep us alive, till we could communicate with the country. Gen. Sherman replied with a long lecture or harangue on our folly in beginning the war, the subject of slavery, the mismanagement of Beauregard, condition of Georgia, etc.

The fire, he admitted, was caused by his troops saying: "It is our men have burnt Columbia, but it was your fault." And when Dr. Goodwyn inquired, "How so, General?" He replied that our people had made his soldiers drunk, citing an

instance of a druggist, who he was told brought out a pail of whiskey to them. Dr. Miot here interrupted him to remark that he was a druggist, but he had heard of no such case. Mr. McCarter also stated that a soldier had demanded his watch, while pointing a pistol at his head, but the General only laughed and told him that he ought to have resisted. He concluded by consenting to leave us 500 head of beef cattle, 100 muskets and ammunition, all the salt at the Charleston railroad depot, and wire enough to work a flat across the river. He also promised that his Surgeon General should turn over to us some medicine for the use of the sick in our midst. This, he said, was contrary to usage, but I thought his treatment of Columbia liable to the same remark. Some of us went to the depot, where we found 60 or 80 tierces of salt, which Gen. Howard agreed to haul to the new State House for us. While on the way we saw the gas works on fire.

Gen. Sherman, in his discourse to us, never named nor alluded to Gen. Hampton or the burning of the cotton as causing the fire. Yet in his official report, which was probably made the same day, he charged it to Hampton, acknowledging, as it seems to me, that he knew the charge to be false at the time. I quote his own words: "In my official report of this conflagration I distinctly charged it to Gen Wade Hampton, and confess I did so pointedly to shake the faith of his people in him, for he was, in my opinion, a braggart and professed to be the special champion of South Carolina." (See Sherman's Memoirs, Vol. II, page 287.) Surely any comment on this precious confession would be superfluous, since it discloses, in a single sentence, the character of its author and the length to which he will go in dealing with an opponent.

In his Memoirs he says further: "Many of the people thought the fire was deliberately planned and executed. This is not true. It was accidental, and, in my judgment, began with the cotton which Gen. Hampton's men had set fire to on leaving the city."

Thus it appears that he gave three different versions of the origin of the fire, each one varying from and incousistent with the other two, to wit: First, that it was caused by his men;

second, by Gen. Hampton ; third, by accident. Which, if either, is to be believed? I have no hesitation in saying the first, for the following, among other reasons :

1. Because he knew, and he said so voluntarily on the second day after it occurred, while it was fresh in his mind, in the presence of our citizens named above and a half dozen or so of his own officers of the highest rank, who knew the facts, and who, by their silence, acquiesced in and endorsed its correctness, since they would hardly have allowed so grave a charge against their men to pass without a contradiction if they had known it to be untrue.

2. On page 288 of his Memoirs occurs this passage : "Having utterly ruined Columbia, the right wing took up its march northward, etc."

3. Gen. Howard, while in Columbia in 1867, called on Governor Orr at his office, above stairs in the Branch Bank building, my bank and brother's office being on the first floor. There he met, besides Governor Orr, Gen. Hampton, Gen. John S. Preston, James G. Gibbes, and F. G. DeFontaine Gen. Hampton came down from the Executive office to mine and said to me : "I have just left Gen. Howard up stairs, and was greatly pleased to hear him say, in conversing upon the burning of this place : 'It is useless to deny that our troops burnt Columbia, for I saw them in the act.'" I understand Gen. Howard made a similar statement to Col. L. D. Childs the same day.

4. I have mingled with the people of Columbia ever since the fire, except when occasionally absent for a short time, and have conversed on the subject with all classes, old and young, rich and poor, male and female, white and colored, and among them all have never heard it attributed to any other cause, many giving instances of the troops carrying from house to house balls of rags or cotton saturated with spirits of turpentine, and calling on the inmates to come out, when they set fire to the building and robbed them of their contents.

5. Because these same troops burnt Orangeburg, Lexington, Winnsboro, Camden, and Cheraw, besides hundreds of private residences in the country. Col. Stone, who received the sur-

render of Columbia, published a statement, some years ago, describing the destruction of dwellings and desolation of the country wherever their army marched throughout the State. And there is no pretense that any of these were accidental or caused by burning cotton. Then, as to Hampton's causing the fire, Sherman's own confession puts the innocence of the former beyond doubt.

In favor of the accidental burning, he dismisses the subject by saying in his Memoirs, page 287 : "This whole subject has since been thoroughly and judicially investigated, in some cotton cases, by the mixed commission of American and British claims, under the treaty of Washington, which commission failed to find a verdict in favor of the English claimants, and thereby settled the fact that the destruction of property in Columbia, during that night, did not result from the acts of the General Government of the United States—that is to say, from my army."

Unfortunately for Gen. Sherman, that verdict settled nothing but the British claims in the cotton cases then tried, and, as I hope to show, it was founded on defective and incorrect testimony. The higher claims of truth, justice and humanity were neither considered nor settled by it. These concerned the citizens of Columbia and involved interests infinitely superior, in character and extent, to the value of all the cotton. They could not be settled by a mere inference or implication on a side issue in a case between entirely different parties, tried by a tribunal created for a different and distinct purpose. I understand the issue before the commission was whether the government had taken cotton belonging to British claimants, and was decided in the negative because the cotton was burnt and therefore could not have been taken. Who burnt the town was another question, into which the commission had no right to inquire and did not enter. To pass upon it a court or commission should have met in Columbia where the transaction occurred and the facts were best known, instead of at Washington, five hundred miles distant, under the influence of the United States Government and of Gen. Sherman. To give some idea of the evidence that would have been submitted

in that case, and how it was procured, I will state that when Sherman's charge against Hampton became known in Columbia, a public meeting was held to provide for collecting the testimony in relation to the destruction of the city, and that Chancellor J. P. Carroll, lately deceased, as chairman of a committee appointed for that purpose, received more than sixty depositions and statements in writing from as many individuals. I quote from his report an outline of its contents. This report, I understand, is to be published in full by Chancellor Carroll's family :

"The array of witnesses is impressive, not merely because of their number, but for the high tone and elevated character of some, the unpretending and sterling probity of others, and the general intelligence and worth of all. The plain and unvarnished narrative subjoined is taken from the testimony referred to, solely and exclusively, except so much as refers to certain declarations of Gen. Sherman and the forces under his command. The soldiers were universal in their threats ; they seemed to gloat over the distress that would accrue from their march in the State. General Sherman himself said to a lady of his acquaintance : Go off the line of the railroad. I will not answer for the consequences where the army passes."

Before the surrender of the town, the soldiers or Gen. Sherman, officers and privates, declared that it was to be destroyed. At Lexington, on the 16th of February, Gen. Kilpatrick said in reference to Columbia : "Sherman will lay it in ashes for them?" A Federal Lieutenant on the 17th wrote to Mrs. McCord : "My heart bleeds to think of what is threatening ; leave the town, go anywhere to be safer than there." To W. H. Orchard the leader of a squad said : "If you have anything you wish to save, take care of it at once, for before morning this d'nd town will be in ashes. If you watch, you will see the rockets go up soon. If you don't take my advice, you will see hell." Within an hour afterwards three rockets were seen to ascend, and but a few minutes elapsed before fires in quick succession broke out at intervals so distant that they could not have been communicated from one to the other. At various parts of the town the soldiers of Gen. Sherman at the

appearance of the rockets declared that they were the appointed signals for a general conflagration. The soldiers with bayonets and axes pierced and cut the hose, disabled the engines and prevented the citizens from extinguishing the flames. By 3 o'clock A. M. on the night of February 17th, 1865, more than two-thirds of the town lay in ashes, comprising the most highly improved and the entire business part of it. That Columbia was burned by the soldiers of Gen. Sherman, that the vast majority of the incendiaries were sober, that for hours they were seen with combustibles firing house after house, without any affectation of concealment and without the slightest check from their officers, is established by proof full to repletion, and wearisome from its very superfluity. After the destruction of the town, his officers and men approved of its burning and exulted in it. It was said by members of the soldiers that the order had been given to burn down the city.

As to the cotton, Gens. Beauregard and Hampton ordered it not to be burned. These orders were issued by Capt. Rawlins Lowndes, then acting as Hampton's Adjutant, and Gen. M. C. Butler, who was with the rear squadron of the Confederate cavalry, deposes that Hampton directed him that the cotton was not to be burnt ; that this direction was communicated to the entire division and was strictly observed. Rev. A. Toomer Porter was told by Gen. Hampton : "The cotton is not to be burnt ; the wind is too high ; it might catch something and give Sherman an excuse for burning the town." Mayor Goodwyn deposes that Hampton said the same to him. The wind blew from the west, but the fires at night broke out west of Main and Sumter streets, where the cotton bales were, and instead of burning the houses was probably burnt by them.

March 15th. James G. Gibbes has acted as mayor in place of Dr. Goodwyn, who became completely worn out from fatigue and anxiety when Sherman left us. Gibbes, by common consent, was the only man here with energy and capacity for the occasion. He seemed to never tire or relax his efforts, going everywhere, listening to all complaints, attending all calls, talking, eating and drinking as he went, and his services to the city were beyond all computation or compensation, yet

he never charged or received a single cent, and seemed glad for once in his life to have on hand as much as he could do. I have served daily in distributing for good; have met a committee with Dr. Gibbes, Dr. John Fisher, Messrs Edgerton, J. A. Crawford, and D P. McDonald for the trial of disorderly negroes, who need checking these lawless times, and have attended meetings of a committee of city council with Mr. Kerrison and Col. Heyward, deputed by the Governor to collect and distribute supplies. The five hundred beeves left us by Gen. Sherman proved to be the starving cattle that his foragers had collected on their march, and were miserably poor, yet they served to keep our people alive for some weeks, a ration of a pound of this wretched beef and a quart of meal per day being issued to the number of 7,000 applicants whom we had enrolled. The supply of medicine for our 20,000 population, received by Dr. Gibbes from the Federal Surgeon General, was in a box that would have held one or two hundred cigars, with a pint bottle of castor oil.

LETTER FROM HON. ALFRED HUGER.

I am indebted to the scrap book of Miss Kate Crawford for the following letter from Hon. Alfred Huger. No gentleman was better known in the State than he. His letter, taken from the New York World, speaks for itself:

CHARLESTON. S. C., Aug. 22, 1866.

To the Editor of the World:

Sir: I most unwillingly leave the retirement and obscurity which old age and circumstances have provided; but a remark in your paper of the 13th seems to demand it. A writer signed "S," replying to an article in Harper's Magazine, for August, introduces my name in these words: "This must refer to Alfred Hugher, for many years postmaster at Charleston," etc., etc. I turn to the Magazine and, to my surprise, find a contributor whose purpose and motive it is not my business to define making capital out of so barren a subject as myself. Beginning with the "Burning of Columbia" and the abuse of Gen. Hampton, he says: "Among others to whom I was sent to give assistance was Mr. Huger, a well known citizen of South Carolina," and then recounts an elaborate conversation about a band of thieves, calling themselves Wheeler's Cavalry, etc. And in another part of his narrative writes: "When the citizens of Columbia begin their investigations of the burning of that city, and pillaging of houses and robbing of citizens, let them not forget to take the evidence of Mr. Huger." I am thus put on the stand without being consulted, and shall commence by saying that if this individual or any other was ever "sent" to my "assistance," the mission has been strangely disregarded. I never saw any such person as he claims to be, though I was an eye witness to the burning of Columbia. I never had any such intercourse with any human being in Gen. Sherman's army, or out of it; and if investigations are made, and the evidence of Mr. Huger is called for, I shall, with a deep consciousness of what is due to truth, say that, all that I heard, all that I suffered, all that I believe, is

in direct opposition to what is affirmed by the writer for Harper's Magazine, and for which he quotes Mr. Huger as a portion of his authority; and I ask leave to add, after maturely reflecting upon the events of that fearful night, when every feeling of humanity seemed to be obliterated if my "well being" here and hereafter depended on the accuracy of my statement, I would say that the precision, order, method, and discipline which prevailed from the entrance of the Federal army to its departure could only emanate from military authority.

How could I come to any other conclusion, with the fact, regarded as indisputable, that the city was doomed before it was taken? and that, as the tragedy progressed, everybody saw the programme carried out, as they had previously expected? or how am I to believe my own senses when an individual, pretending to be an officer, talks of burning the city, pillaging houses, robbing citizens, etc., as if these were unfounded charges? Why, sir, I never supposed I was dealt with more hardly than others, because I know that the "plunder" was universal. Yet Mr. Huger, who is to bear witness for one who was sent to assist him, now declares "that he was mercilessly robbed; that his person was ruthlessly violated; that food was taken away from his orphan children, and that his family were brutally insulted by well-mounted and well-armed men in the uniform of the United States!" For aught I know, it may be usual or even necessary to grant this license; while the denial is equally absurd and wicked, and the attempt to implicate other people is the consumation of both! But this is the end that such things come to, and the natural consequence of calling witnesses to prove what the witnesses themselves know to be false. I saw those who were apparently plying their vocation deliberately set fire to houses, carrying with them combustible preparations for doing so. Of the effort made to prevent them I say nothing, because I saw nothing. It gratifies me, however, to relate this instance of kindness. My own house was about to be destroyed by the firing of an adjoining building. There were two western men looking on—soldiers in the true sense of the word. I asked one of them,

(their names were Elliott and Goodman, one from Indiana, the other from Iowa) "Have you a family at home?" He answered "Yes." I said to him, "My family is ill in that room; have you no thought of your own?" The man showed that he had a heart, and as the incendiary moved off to other objects, he did assist me, without being "sent," and with my servants and the only child I had big enough to "hand a bucket" we saved the house, with its helpless inmates, thanks to this Good Samaritan.

My conviction is that Columbia was cruelly and uselessly sacked and burned without resistance, after being in complete possession of Gen. Sherman's army; but who gave the "order" to apply the torch, is not for the victims either to know or to care. Hundreds of helpless women and children were turned out to their fate. It is the historian's business to find evidence to meet the case, not mine, and my voice would never have been heard, had I not been unjustly dragged before the public. The truth, and the whole truth, will probably never appear; but it is "recorded in the high chancery of Heaven, where no human power can make the erasure."

Mr. Editor, I crave your patience a little longer, and beg your attention to the first sentence in the article of which I complain. It reads thus: "If Mr. Wade Hampton is anxious to add a deeper shame to a dishonored name, he has attained that end by his renewed attempts to hold Gen. Sherman responsible for the burning of Columbia and its terrible consequences," etc. Now, sir, I speak for every honest man between the mountains and the seacoast, and between the Savannah river and the Pee Dee, when I say, "If this opinion and this epithet are not equally revolting and insulting, then the common sensibilities of nature are made extinct by the sufferings we have endured." If "Hampton" is a "dishonored name," there is none within the limits of this downtrodden and persecuted State that can be considered as unsullied. Here in South Carolina, and throughout the South, every human being feels that where the name of Hampton is best known it is most revered, and he who bears it is the most beloved. Before the present incumbent saw the light, that

name was identified with all that is brave, and honorable, and generous. What a noble sire (who emphatically and habitually "did the honors" of his native State) has left impressed upon the hearts of his countrymen as a legacy to his children, this slandered Mr. Wade Hampton, late Lieutenant-General of the Confederate army, will transmit to another generation bright and untarnished. If there is one among us more cherished than the rest, it is he upon whom this gratuitous assault is so brutally, and yet so feebly made. And if today or tomorrow a canvass should be opened for our "representative man" to fill the highest office in the gift of a heart-broken, but grateful people, none could be found strong enough to compete with him for their favors. And it would be untrue to the living and the dead if such were not the unanimous decision.

I have said that the historian must find evidence as to the burning of Columbia and he will find it. The foolish attempt to hold Hampton responsible is beyond the tether of his last calumniator and is hardly worthy of a serious refutation.

These few questions, when they are asked, will be found difficult to answer. Where was Hampton when the conflagration began to take its regular course at 8 o'clock at night? Did the cotton which was burning at the east end of Main street travel against a gale of wind to the extreme west more than a mile off? Was it not there and then that we were called on to perceive that our doom was sealed? Why talk of putting out the fire in a church-yard when it is notorious that the sacramental silver belonging to the altar was stolen, and I think subsequently given up? Did Hampton burn the country seats surrounding Columbia, leaving his kith and kindred without a shelter? Did he burn every farm house on the wayside and away from the wayside—every grist mill and flour mill? Did he burn Camden, Winnsboro and Cheraw? Was the quantity of silver plate taken from the citizens of Columbia sold for Hampton's benefit in New York and elsewhere? Is it the necessary province ofwar to obliterate all mercy and all shame? But enough. When the searcher of hearts commences his "investigations" Hampton will be found entrenched by truth—surrounded by

that strength which "prosperity and victory" cannot give, and which "adversity and malignity" cannot take away.

Mr. Editor, we are doing our best, with Heaven's help, to have a country once more. North, South, East and West are enlisted in this holy enterprise. All have joined hands in this sacred work, and a Chief Magistrate, distinguished for his high sense of duty, and for his inflexible courage in its performance wisely tells us "if we cannot forget the past, we can never have a future;" and standing as I do, almost in sight of the grave, among the oldest men in the State that gave me birth, I will say "Amen" to their sentiment. Let the past be forgotten, if such is possible; at any rate let it not be referred to if the object is "peace" and the "hope" is in the future.

I am very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ALFRED HUGER.

LETTER FROM GENERAL WADE HAMPTON.

Columbia, S. C., July 14, 1865.

To the Editor of the Day Book:

Gentlemen: In your paper of the 6th of May I have just seen Gen. Sherman's official report of his march through the two Carolinas. As his report misrepresents me in the grossest and falsest manner, I trust, that you will not deny me the right to vindicate myself. It is due to history, if it is not to me, that the falsehoods of Gen. Sherman in reference to the destruction of this city should be exposed. This shall be done in the briefest possible manner. The report says: "Gen. Wade Hampton, who commanded the rear guard of cavalry, had in anticipation of our capture of Columbia ordered that all cotton, public and private, should be moved into the street and fired to prevent our making use of it. * * * Some of these piles of cotton were burning, especially one, in the very heart of the city near the Court House, but the fire was partially subdued by the labor of our soldiers. * * * Before one single public building had been fired by order the smouldering fires set by Hampton's order were rekindled by the wind and communicated to the buildings around. About dark they began to spread and get beyond the control of the brigade on duty within the city. The whole of Wood's division was brought in, but it was found impossible to check the flames, which by midnight had become unmanagable and raged until about 4 o'clock A. M., when the wind subsiding, they were got under control. * * * I disclaim on the part of my army any agency in this fire, but on the contrary claim that we saved what of Columbia remains unconsumed. And without hesitation, I charge Gen. Wade Hampton with having burned his own city of Columbia; not with malicious intent, as the manifestation of a silly Roman stoicism, but from folly and want of sense in filling it with lint cotton and tinder. Our officers and men on duty worked well to extinguish the flames."

It would be difficult if not impossible to express in an equal number of paragraphs a greater number of falsehoods than are contained in the above extracts. There is not one word of truth in all that has been quoted, except the statement that "Gen. Wade Hampton commanded the rear-guard of the Confederate cavalry." I did not order any cotton "moved into the street and fired." On the contrary, my first act on taking command of the cavalry, to which I was assigned only the night before the evacuation of Columbia, was to represent to Gen. Beauregard, the danger to the town by firing the cotton in the streets. Upon this representation he authorized me to give orders that *no* cotton in the town should be fired, which order was strictly carried out. I left the city after the head of Sherman's column entered it, and I assert, what can be proved by thousands, *that not one bale of cotton was on fire when he took possession of the city.* His assertion to the contrary is false, and he knows it to be so. A distinguished citizen of this State, whose name, were I at liberty to give it, would be a sufficient voucher even at the North, for the truth of any statement made by him, has given to the public a minute history of the destruction of the city. From his document, which is too long for insertion in your paper, I make a few extracts which will show how true is Gen. Sherman's solemn disclaimer of "any agency in this fire" and his claim to have "saved what of Columbia remains unconsumed." The mayor had been informed that he would be notified when to surrender the city. Knowing that ineffectual resistance on our part would furnish the ready excuse for all lawlessness on the part of the enemy, I would not allow my troops to become engaged in the city, and they were withdrawn on the morning of the 17th of February. At 9 o'clock A. M., on that day, the mayor, at the head of the deputation from the city council went out to meet Gen. Sherman for the purpose of surrendering the city, which he did in the following letter:

Columbia, S. C., Feb. 17, 1865.

To Major General Sherman:

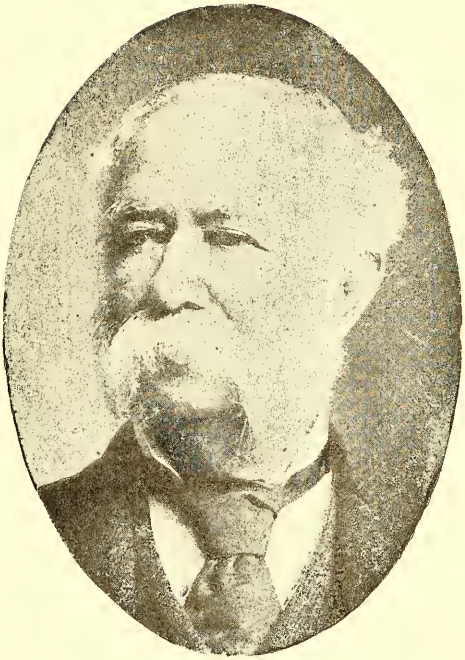
The Confederate forces having evacuated Columbia, I deem it my duty as mayor and representative of the city to ask for

the citizens the treatment accorded by the usages of civilized warfare. I therefore respectfully request that you will send a sufficient guard in advance of the army to maintain order in the city and to protect the persons and property of the citizens.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

[Signed.] T. J. GOODWYN, Mayor.

The deputation met the advanced guard of the enemy under Col. Stone, 15th Corps, *outside of the city*, and Col. Stone returned with them to the town in their carriage. The mayor reports that on surrendering the city to Col. Stone, the latter assurred him of the safety of the citizens and the protection of their property *while under his command.* He could not answer for Gen. Sherman, who was in the rear, but he expressed the conviction that he would fully confirm the assurances which he (Col. Stone) had given. Subsequently, Gen. Sherman did confirm them, and that night, seeing that the mayor was *exhausted* by the labors of the day, he counselled him to retire to rest—saying, "Not a finger's breadth, Mr. Mayor, of your city shall be burned, you may lie down to sleep, satisfied that your town shall be as safe in my hands as if wholly in your own." * * * At about 11 o'clock the head of the column reached Market Hall. Hardly had the troops reached the head of Main street when the work of pillage was begun. Stores were broken open in the presence of thousands, within the first hour after their arrival. No attempt was made to stop the burglars. The authorities, officers, soldiers, all seemed to consider it a matter of course. And woe to him who carried a watch with gold chain pendant, or who wore a choice hat, or overcoat, or boots, or shoes. He was stripped by ready experts "in the twinkling of an eye." * * * "About 12 o'clock the jail was discovered to be on fire from within. This building was immediately in rear of the City or Market Hall, and in a densely built portion of the city. * * * The fire in the jail had been preceded by that of some cotton piled in the streets. *Both fires were soon subdued by our firemen.* At about one and a half o'clock P. M. that of the jail was rekindled, and was again extinguished. The experience of the



Gen. Wade Hampton.

firemen in putting out the fire in the cotton and in the jail was of a sort to discourage their further efforts. They were thwarted and embarrassed by the continued interference of the soldiery. Finally their hose was chopped with swords and axes and pierced with bayonets, so as to be rendered useless. The engines were in some cases demolished also. And so the miserable day wore on in pillage, insult and constant confusion and alarm. We have shown that the robbery of the persons of the citizens and plunder of their houses commenced within one hour after they reached the Market Hall. It continued without intermission throughout the day. Sherman traversed the streets everywhere; so did his officers, yet they saw nothing to rebuke or restrain. * * * Robbery was going on at every corner, in every house, yet there was no censure, no punishment." * * * Among the first fires at evening, was one about dark, which broke out in a filthy portion of low houses occupied mostly as brothels. There were then some twenty fires in full blast in as many different quarters at nearly the same moment, and while the alarm sounded from these quarters, a similar alarm was sent up almost simultaneously from Cotton Town the northernmost limits of the city, and from Main street in its centre." * * * "The wretches engaged in this appointed incendiarism were well prepared with all the appliances essential to their work. They carried with them from house to house pots and vessels containing combustible liquids and with balls of fire satuated in this liquid they conveyed the flames with wonderful rapidity from dwelling to dwelling."

"What remained from the morning, of engines and hose, were brought out by the firemen, but they were soon driven from their labors by the pertinacious hostility of the incendiaries. Engines were tumbled over and disabled, the hose was hewn to pieces, and the firemen dreading worse usage to themselves left the field in despair." * * * "Old men, women and children were to be seen often while the flames were rolling and raging around them, while walls were cracking and rafters tottering and tumbling, in the endeavor to save their clothing and some of their more valuable effects. They were

driven out headlong by pistols clapped to their heads, violent hands laid on their throats and collar, and ruffians seemed to make but little distinction in their treatment of man and woman. Ladies were bustled from their chambers under the strong arm or with the menacing pistol at their hearts. Their ornaments plucked from their persons, their bundles from their hands."

"A lady undergoing the pains of labor had to be borne out on a mattress into the open air to escape the fire. It was in vain that her situation was described to the incendiaries as they applied the torch within and without the house. They beheld the situation of the sufferer and laughed to scorn the prayer for safety. Another lady was but recently confined. Her life hung upon a hair. The demons were apprised of the facts in the case. They burst into her chamber, took rings from the lady's finger, plucked the watch from beneath her pillow shrieked offensive language in her ears, and so overwhelmed her with terror that she sank under the treatment, surviving but a day or two."

"The churches were at first sought by many. Thither the hellish perseverance of the fiends followed them, and the churches of God were set on fire. Again driven forth, members made their way into the recesses of Sidney Park and here fancied to find security. But the ingenuity of hate and malice was not to be baffled, and firebrands thrown——The *height into the deepest hollows of the Park taught the wretched fugitives to despair of any escape from enemies of such unwearied and unremitting rage!*"

But enough of this atrocity, the bare recital of which makes humanity shudder and the heart grow sick. Surely enough has been quoted from the narrative of these horrors, to prove that Gen. Sherman is alone responsible for the destruction of Columbia, and for the many other atrocities committed by his army. He declares that the fires set by my order consumed the city. I have shown how false is this statement; but even were it true, how does he clear himself of the guilt of burning private dwellings outside of the city limits? Early in the afternoon of the day he entered Columbia, my home, which

was two miles from the city, was fired; soon after the houses of Mr. Trenholm, Gen. Lovell, Mrs. Stark, Dr. Wallace, Mr. Arthur, Mr. Latta, and Mrs. English, all in the same vicinity, shared the same fate. Gen. Sherman cannot deny that these houses were burned by his men, nor can he deny that he destroyed in part the villages of Barnwell, Buford's Bridge, Orangeburg, Lexington, Alston, Pomaria, Winnsboro, Blackstock, Society Hill, Camden, and Cheraw. Does not the fate of the unoffending towns give the lie to his disclaimer of any agency in the burning of this city?

Along the line of march followed by him there is scarcely one house left standing from the Savannah river to the Pedee, and yet he dares to declare solemnly that he did not burn Columbia. I do not wonder that he should strive to escape the infamy, which, like the leprosy of Gehagi, shall cleave unto him and his seed forever, for the commission of this dark deed. Nor am I surprised that he should naturally seek to escape by taking refuge behind a falsehood. But he shall not with impunity make me the scape-goat for his sins. Wherever he has taken his army in this State, women have been insulted or outraged, old men have been hung to extort from them hidden treasure. The fruits of the earth have been destroyed, leaving starvation where plenty once reigned, and the dwellings of rich and poor alike have been laid in ashes. For these deeds history will brand him as a robber and incendiary and will deservedly "damn him to everlasting fame."

I am your obedient servant,

WADE HAMPTON,

Lieutenant General, C. S. A.

From "The New York Day Book," Saturday, July 15, 1865.

LETTER FROM THOS. G. MYERS.

The following is a copy of a letter brought to Miss F. Cantey, of Camden, from the Yankee camp, near that city. It is directed to Mrs. Thos. G. Myers, Boston, Mass., and was published in a Camden newspaper. It corroborates what was believed at that time, that officers wore citizens' and privates' dress, in order to rob without *compromising* their *shoulder straps*:

South Carolina, Feb. 26, 1865.

My Dear Wife: I have no time for particulars. We have had a glorious time in this State. Universal license to burn and plunder was the order of the day. The chivalry have been stript of most of their valuables. Gold watches, silver pitchers, cups, spoons, forks, etc., etc., are as common in camp as blackberries. The terms of plunder are as follows:

The valuables procured we estimate by companies. Each company is required to exhibit the result of its operations at any given place. One-fifth and first choice falls to the share of the Commander-in-chief and staff, one-fifth to field officers of regiments, and three-fifths to the company. Officers are not allowed to join these expeditions without disguising themselves as privates. One of our corps commanders borrowed a suit of rough clothes from one of my men and was successful in this place; he got a large quantity of silver, (among other things, an old time silver milk pitcher) and a very fine gold watch from a Mr. DeSaussure at this place. DeSaussure is a F. F. V., of South Carolina, and was made to fork over liberally. Officers over the rank of Captain are not made to put their plunder in the estimate for general distribution. This is very unfair, and for that reason, in order to protect themselves, subordinate officers and privates keep back everything that they can carry about their person, such as rings, ear-rings, breast-pins, etc., of which, if ever I live to get home, I have about a quart—I am not joking—I have at least a quart of

jewelry for you and all the girls, and some No. 1 diamond rings and pins among them.

Gen. Sherman has silver and gold enough to start a bank. His share in gold watches and chains alone at Columbia was two hundred and seventy-five (275); but I said I could not go into particulars. All the general officers and many privates had valuables of every description, even to ladies' embroidered pocket handkerchiefs (I have my share of them, too). We took gold and silver enough from the d–d rebels to have redeemed their infernal currency twice over. This, (the currency) whenever we come across it we burn as we consider it utterly worthless. I wish all the jewelry this army has could be carried to the old Bay State It would deck her out in glorious style, but alas! it will be scattered all over the North and Middle States. The d–d negroes, as a rule, prefer to stay at home, particularly after they found out that we only wanted ablebodied men (and, to tell you the truth, the youngest and best looking women). Sometimes we take off whole families and plantations of negroes by way of repaying the secessionists; but the useless part of these we soon manage to loose—sometimes in crossing rivers—sometimes in other ways.

I shall write to you again from Wilmington, Goldsboro, or some other place in North Carolina. The order to march has arrived and I must close hurriedly.

Love to Grandmother and Aunt Charlotte. Take care of yourself and the children. Do not show this letter out of the family.

Your affectionate husband,

THOS. G. MYERS, Lieut., etc.

P. S.—I will send this by flag of truce to be mailed unless I have a chance of sending it to Hilton Head. Tell Sallie I am saving a pearl bracelet and ear-rings for her; but Lambert got the necklace and breast-pin of the same set. I am trying to trade him out of them. These were taken from the Misses Jamieson, daughters of the President of the South Carolina Secession Convention. We found them on our trip through Georgia.

EXTRACTS FROM ACCOUNT WRITTEN BY DR. TREZEVANT.

In 1866 Dr. D. H. Trezevant, one of the most highly esteemed citizens of Columbia, wrote an account of the "Destruction of Columbia," quoting from the books of Conyngham and Major Nichols, staff officers and historians of Gen. Sherman. He quotes from account of Conyngham as follows:

"Our march through the city was so orderly that even the Southerners began to bless their stars that the reign of terror was over, and that a reign of peace and security, like that at Savannah was about being inaugurated. Alas! that the scenes of the night should mar so auspicious a beginning." I spent the evening in the Capitol, looking over the archives and libraries. Part of Col. Stone's brigade—I think the 13th Ohio, Col. Kennedy's regiment—was on duty there. Towards night, crowds of our escaped prisoners, soldiers and negroes, intoxicated with their new-born liberty, which they looked upon as a license to do as they pleased, were parading the streets in groups." No mention as yet of any fires about the town, or any cotton having been found flying about, or on fire, but he writes: "As soon as night set in, there ensued a sad scene indeed." (This is the time Sherman reports that the fires were in full blast, and that he had called in the rest of Wood's division.) "The suburbs were first set on fire"—(by whom? the prisoners and soldiers and negroes for it was not within 500 yards of the cotton that Sherman saw burning,) "*some assert*, by the burning cotton which the rebels had piled along the streets. Pillaging gangs soon fired the heart of the town, then entered the houses, in many instances, carrying off articles of value. The flames soon burst out in all parts of the town," etc., etc. "I trust I shall never witness such a scene again—drunken soldiers rushing from house to house, emptying them of their valuables, and then firing them; negroes carrying off piles of booty, and grinning at the good chance and exulting like so many demons; officers and

men revelling on the wines and liquors until the burning houses buried them in their drunken orgies." I think this looks very much like a city turned over to the soldiery to do with as they please; corresponds with what they said—that they were authorized first to sack, and then to burn it—that they, both officers and men, had so determined, and that it met with Old Bill's full approbation. "The frequent shots on every side told that some victim had fallen—shrieks and groans and cries of distress resounded from every side. A troop of cavalry—I think the 29th Missouri—were left to patrol the streets; but I did not once see them interfering with the groups that rushed about to fire and pillage the houses." Methinks after penning such a description, that there was no occasion to ask "who was to blame for the burning of Columbia."

"There can be no denial of the assertion, that the feeling among the troops was one of extreme bitterness towards the people of the State of South Carolina. It was freely expressed as the column hurried over the bridge at Sister's ferry, eager to commence the punishment of original secessionists. Threatening words were heard from soldiers who prided themselves on conservatism in house-burning while in Georgia, and officers openly confessed their fears that the coming campaign would be a wicked one. Just or unjust as this feeling was towards the country people in South Carolina, it was universal. I first saw its fruits at Raryburg (Purisburg is meant), where two or three piles of blackened bricks and an acre or so of dying embers marked the site of an old revolutionary town; and this before the column had fairly got its hand in."

At McBride's plantation, where Gen. Sherman had his headquarters, the outhouses, offices, shanties and surroundings were all set on fire before he left. I think the fire approaching the dwelling hastened his departure. If a house was empty, this was *prima facie* evidence that the owners were rebels, and all was sure to be consigned to the flames. If they remained at home it was taken for granted that every one in South Carolina was a rebel, and the chances were the place was consumed. In Georgia few houses were burned; here few escaped, and the country was converted into one vast bon-

fire. The pine forests were fired; the resin factories were fired; the public buildings and private dwellings were fired. The middle of the finest day looked black and gloomy, for a dense smoke arose on all sides clouding the very heavens—at night the tall pine trees seemed so many huge pillars of fire. The flames hissed and screeched, as they fed on the fat resin and dry branches, imparting to the forest a most fearful appearance."

"Vandalism of this kind, though not encouraged, was seldom punished. True, where every one is guilty alike, there will be no informers."

"The ruined homesteads of the Palmetto State will long be remembered. The army might safely march the darkest night, the crackling pine woods shooting up their columns of flame, and the burning houses along the way would light it on, while the dark clouds and pillars would safely cover its rears. I hazard nothing in saying that three-fifths in value of the personal property of the counties we have passed through, were taken by Sherman's army. The graves were even ransacked, etc. The scenes I witnessed in Columbia, were scenes that would have driven Alaric the Goth into frenzied ecstasies had he witnessed them."

"As for the wholesale burnings, pillage, devastation, committed in South Carolina, magnify all I have said of Georgia some fifty fold, and then throw in an occasional murder, 'just to bring an old hardfisted cuss to his senses,' and you have a pretty good idea of the whole thing. Besides compelling the enemy to evacuate Charleston, we *destroyed Columbia*, *Orangeburg*, and *several other places*, also over fifty miles of railroad, and thousands of bales of cotton." This is a very fair admission, and we might rest here and go no farther. After what he has admitted to have been done on the route, to conclude the acts of the army by saying they had destroyed Columbia was giving up the question. On his mind there could have been no doubt as to who burnt the city, and as little as to who was the cause of its being burned.

The enviable notoriety is certainly due to Sherman, and to him alone. Those who did the deed were mere agents, and

acted to please a cherished commander; they all stated that they knew what Old Bill, (their pet name for him) wanted, and they were determined he should be gratified.

* * * * * * *

Major Nichols next presents himself, and as a staff officer of Gen. Sherman, we may suppose that *ego etrex meus* to be one. His account is very much the counterpart of Sherman's, but he has many remarks and admissions that are peculiarly apropos to the subject, and calculated to lead one definitely to the object sought after, viz: "who is to blame for the burning of Columbia." Major Nichols remarks under the date of January 30th: "The actual invasion of South Carolina has begun. The well known sight of columns of black smoke meets our gaze again; this time houses are burning, and South Carolina has commenced to pay an instalment, long overdue, on her debt to justice and humanity. With the help of God, we will have principal and interest before we leave her borders. There is a terrible gladness in the realization of so many hopes and wishes." Again, Nichols exclaims: "But here we are; and wherever our footsteps pass, fire, ashes and desolation follow in the path." In speaking of the occupation of the city, "On every side were evidences of disorder; bales of cotton scattered here and there, articles of merchandise and furniture cast pell mell in every direction by the frightened inhabitants, etc." But no mention of anything on fire. Nichols writes: "I began today's record early in the evening, and while writing, I noticed an unusual glare in the sky and heard a sound of running to and fro in the streets. Running out, I found to my surprise and real sorrow," (why so after the expressions used above?) "that the central part of the city, including the main business street, was in flames, while the wind, which had been blowing a hurricane all day, was driving the sparks and cinders in heavy masses over the eastern portion of the city where the finest residences are situated. Those buildings, all wooden, were instantly ignited by the flying sparks. In half an hour the conflagration was raging in every direction, etc." It will be perceived that both Conyngham and Nichols state that the fire commenced in the evening, after dark, at the very

time Sherman states it to have been so great that he had to call in Wood's division. It will be observed also, that Conyngham, in his remarks, states "that Sherman and Howard, instead of looking after a single fire, when hundreds were burning around, had better have called in fresh troops and driven the drunkards out with steel and lead." And again, that he says, "about day Wood's division was called on, when nothing was left to pillage or burn." It is important to bear these facts in memory, as it will be seen that when Sherman gives an account of the catastrophe to free himself from blame, he changes the whole order of the affair and makes the fires to have been burning all day, but leaping into life and activity when the night came on, and requiring him to call for additional assistance. Nichols says "Gen. Howard and his officers worked with their own hands until long after midnight, trying to save life and property;" we presume, for the purpose of having it presented to them, as he, Nichols has so naively detailed on page 204—the manner in which silver goblets, etc., had found their way into the camp.

Nichols proceeds and states: "Various causes are assigned to explain the origin of the fire. I am quite sure that it originated in sparks flying from the hundreds of bales of cotton which the rebels had placed along the middle of the main street, and fired as they left the city." This is mere assertion; no proof of the fact has been offered; the number is exagerated, there being not more than fifty bales, and from their own statements, there is every reason to believe that it was not so. It is positively certain that up to half-past eleven o'clock, there had been no fire in the city; and then it had been under the command of Col. Stone for fully one hour. Again, he says: "There were fires, however, which must have been started independent of the above named cause. The source of these is ascribed to the desire for revenge from some 200 of our prisoners who had escaped from the cars as they were being conveyed from this city to Charlotte, etc." Again, it is said that "the soldiers who first entered the town, intoxicated with success and a liberal supply of bad liquor, etc., set fire to unoccupied houses." There has never been any proof offered

as to the cotton having been fired by Hampton's orders, or by his men. It stands alone upon the authority of Gen. Sherman's *ipse dixit.* Col. Stone, who had the best opportunity of judging of the fact, has lately been appealed to, but has made no such report. His evidence has ten times the weight of Sherman's assertion, as he was the first to enter, passed through the main street, went by the cotton and saw it, and left his men at that very spot. From thence he went to the Capitol with Alderman Stork. The men left, occupied themselves as men will do, by lounging about the cotton, laying on it and smoking, and whilst doing so, the cotton was discovered to be on fire about one hour after they had been there.

Nichols proceeds with his narrative and writes: "Houses have unquestionably been burned during our march, but they were the property of notorious rebels who were fortunate in escaping so easily; while I have yet to hear of a single instance of outrage offered to a woman or a child by any soldier of our army." We do not know what Major Nichols may consider an outrage, but for a man to catch a lady by the throat, and thrust his hand into her bosom to feel for her watch, or purse, would in former days have been regarded as such. So would the lifting up of a lady's dress, because she was not quick enough in freeing her purse from her girdle, the threats of death and a pistol at her head having alarmed her and caused her to give. I should hardly suppose that even in such an army as was led by Sherman, it would have been considered very chivalric to place a pistol at a lady's breast, and demand her watch and jewels, while another companion put another to the head of her daughter and demanded the same. Nor would I deem that man entitled to admission in civilized society, who would insult the feelings of a lady by taking a negro wench to a room, opposite to sleeping apartment of herself and daughter, and remain there with her all night; and upon going away with her in the morning, steal everything he could lay his hands on. This was done by one Capt. W. T. Duglass, a commissary under Gen. Blair. His name was given to the ladies by his indignant clerk, with a request that it and the transaction, should be published, and the blackguard be held up as

an example to the community, and for public condemnation. But what shall I say of the villain who fired the house of a lone woman, and then in the presence of the lady took hold of her maid and compelled her to be subservient to his brutal wishes? Words are wanting properly to designate such an act, and we can only say it would have disgraced even Butler, the beast. Yet those acts were committed in many of the houses; in some instances done by officers as well as men.

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I will give one extract more from Nichols and then turn to his commander, who was the source from which the foul slander emanated, and see on what authority he makes his charge. "In the record of great wars we read of vast armies marching through an enemy's country, carrying death and destruction in their path; of villages burned, cities pillaged, a tribe or a nation swept out of existence. History, however, will be searched in vain for a parallel to the scathing and destructive effect of the invasion of the Carolinas." "Putting aside the mere military question for a moment, there are considerations which, overleaping the present generation, affect the future existence of the section of the country through which our army has marched!" "Over a region forty miles in width stretching from Savannah to Port Royal through South Carolina to Goldsboro in North Carolina, agriculture and commerce, even if peace come speedily, cannot be fully revived in our day." "Day by day our legions of armed men surged over the land, destroying its substance. Cattle were gathered into increasing droves; fresh horses and mules were taken to replace the lame and feeble animals; rich granaries and storehouses were stripped of corn, fodder, meal and flour; cotton gins, presses, factories and mills were burned to the ground, on every side; the head, centre and rear of our column might be traced by columns of smoke by day and by the glare of fires by night." "In all the length and breath of that broad pathway the burning hand of war pressed heavily, blasting and withering where it fell." And such was the act of a band of brothers, anxious for the return of the South to the Union, to restore the friendly relations between the two sections of

country. Such were the means used to bring about fraternal concord, to reunite a mistaken people, to restore them to their pristine condition, and insure a lasting peace. It was a most extraordinary device—one worthy of Sherman from whom it emanated, but it really seems more in unison with the views of the officer, who, while wishing them all in hell, yet was determined to "smelt them back into the Union."

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From the subordinates, let me now turn to the great leader, whose word was law, and whose nod was destiny. Let us see what Sherman says as to "who is to blame for the burning of Columbia." In the frequent conversations which Sherman had with the inhabitants of the town, he uniformly attributed its destruction to the whiskey which his men obtained, and their subsequent intoxication. In no instance that I have ever heard, did he attribute it to Gen. Hampton, nor in his letters, did he deny his complicity in the affair, until his report to the General Government; then, for the first time, we learned that Gen. Sherman disclaimed having had anything to do with its destruction; that on the contrary, he ordered it not to be burnt. Such having been the fact, it certainly was very unfortunate for the citizens of Columbia, that the General's views should have been so much misunderstood, and that all the soldiers and officers who came into the city, were under the impression it was a doomed city, and was to be given up to pillage until night; and then at a signal given, it was to be burnt. Such undoubtedly was the prevailing opinion, and a nervous restlessness was to be observed about them, an anxious looking out for an expected event, which they instantly recognized and hailed when the rockets were thrown up, and immediately proceeded to their task. That Gen. Sherman had given his orders to Gen. Howard to burn all the public buildings, by which he meant all that had been used in the Confederate service, he himself, acknowledges. That he did so before he entered the town, or became acquainted with their position, is also certain; that they were so situated, that their cremation would end in one general conflagration, was patent to every one, and the order given for their destruction was, as a matter

of course, an order for the destruction of the city; that Gen. Sherman gave that order he has himself recorded; but in no place has he shown where the order ever was countermanded, or where regarding the safety of the city he had guaranteed, with such a wind as was blowing, that he sought the means to prevent the catastrophe. From the statement of his officers, it was certain that he made no effort to do so—and absolutely certain that he allowed the very corps who had exhibited the greatest animosity, and uttered the most violent threats to enter the city, remain in it when drunk, and continue there until its destruction was completed, or as Conyngham writes "until there was nothing more to pilfer or burn." The same men who were detailed to destroy it, entered with the belief that it would be peculiarly agreeable to him, as Gen. Howard says. They stated such to be their intention. Stated that their orders were on the appearance of a certain signal, the rockets, that they were to fire and pillage, and to continue until the bugle's sound countermanded the orders, and called in the incendiaries. Such were the facts stated by hundreds of the soldiers, and officers as early as 12 o'clock in the day, and such were the facts that developed themselves on the approach of the evening. Gen. Sherman in his remarks to the Secretary of War, endeavors to exculpate himself, and to fix the terrible accident on another. It is my object now to state the charge of the General, and to show to the world that it was not true; and that from all the incidents previous, and subsequent to his entrance into Columbia, he himself and no other was the cause of the destruction of the city of Columbia.

He writes: "In anticipation of the occupation of the city, I had made written orders to Gen. Howard touching the conduct of the troops. These were to destroy absolutely all arsenals and public property not needed for our own use, as well as railroads, depots and machinery, useful in war to an enemy; but to spare all dwellings, colleges, schools, asylum, and harmless property. I was the first to cross the pontoon-bridge, and in company with Gen. Howard rode into the city. The day was clear, but a perfect tempest of wind was raging. The brigade of Col. Stone was already in the city and was

properly posted. Citizens and soldiers were on the streets, and general good order prevailed. Gen. Wade Hampton, who commanded the Confederate rear guard of calvary, had in anticipation of the capture of Columbia, ordered that all cotton, public and private, should be moved into the streets and fired, to prevent our making use of it. Bales were piled everywhere, the rope and bagging cut, and tufts of cotton were blown about in the wind, lodged in the trees and against houses, so as to resemble a snow storm. Some of these piles of cotton were burning, especially, one in the very heart of the city, near the Court House, but the fire was partially subdued by the labors of our soldiers. Before one single public building had been fired by order, the smouldering fires set by Hampton's orders were rekindled by the wind and communicated to the buildings around. About dark, they began to spread and got beyond the control of the brigade on duty within the city. The whole of Wood's division was brought in, but it was found impossible to check the flames, which, by midnight, became unmanageable, and raged until about 4 A. M., when the wind subsiding, they were got under control." "I was up ready all night, and saw Gens Howard, Logan, Wood, and others, laboring to save houses, etc., etc." "I disclaim on the part of my army any agency in this fire, but on the contrary, claim that we saved what of Columbia remains unconsumed. And without hesitation, I charge Gen. Wade Hampton with having burned his own city of Columbia, not with a malicious intent, or as the manifestation of a silly "Roman stoicism," but from folly and want of sense, in filling it with lint cotton and tinder. Our officers and men on duty worked well to extinguish the flames; but others not on duty, including the officers who had long been imprisoned there, rescued by us, may have assisted in spreading the fire, and may have indulged in unconcealed joy to see the ruins of the capital of South Carolina."

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Sherman says "the brigade of Col. Stone was already in the city and properly posted—citizens and soldiers were in the street together, and general good order prevailed." Except in their stealing, such was the fact and continued so until after

dark when the rockets were discharged, and then the whole scene changed. (See Conyngham's and Nichol's account of the conduct of the troops, etc., at that time.) What was it that changed the orderly soldier obedient to his commander, to the midnight assassin, robber and house-burner? Three rockets discharged—the signal agreed on when as the soldiers said "Hell was to be let loose and the city wrapped in flames." But let me take Sherman up in the order of his report. "Gen. Hampton, who commanded, etc., ordered that all cotton should be moved in the streets and fired to prevent our making use of it."

In his letter to Rawls, Sherman says that in the printed order which he saw, Hampton ordered "that on the approach of the Yankee army all the cotton should be burned." This order which he says he saw, and worded as above is the proof that he offeres of Gen. Hampton having burned the town. He has no other. It is the ground of the whole charge, and the one on which all his allegations are founded. Were I to grant that an order had been given by Hampton, it would become necessary for Gen. Sherman to prove that the one he had named was the identical one; and that it gave the direction, and authority to act, which Sherman states; but I am not disposed to cede so much, and I think it can be made apparant, that though in his name, the order did not emenate from him —that he sought to have it countermanded, succeeded in so doing, and had it stopped. That order is dated

HEADQUARTERS, Feb. 14, 1865.

[Special Order No.———]

All persons having cotton stored in the city of Columbia are directed to have it placed where it can be burned in case of necessity without danger of destroying buildings. All cotton stored here will be burned at any cost rather than allow it to fall in the hands of the enemy. By order of

MAJOR GEN. HAMPTON.

R. LOWNDES, CAPT. and A. A. G

February 15th.

I think it will be difficult to show in that order, any direc-

tions to roll the cotton into the streets, or to fire it upon the approach of the Yankee army. It contains nothing of the kind; it is a precautionary order to be acted on if a necessity should occur. Gen. Sherman was too well acquainted with what was transpiring in the army of his opponent, not to know that Gen. Hampton at the time that order was given was not in command—that order is dated on the 14th. Gen. Hampton was put in command on the night of the 16th; he therefore could have had no authority to issue such a one; he was only assisting Beauregard. How that order was printed in his name I know not, and cannot therefore speak. I presume it could be explained, but for my purposes it is not necessary. It unquestionably is not such an order as Sherman stated that he saw—no rolling into the streets—and by it no one was authorized to fire the cotton. It was one of precaution, to be acted on under a contingency, and of that contingency Gen. Hampton was to be the judge. No authority was given to any one to burn it, nor could it have been burnt but by the order of Hampton, who was to judge of the necessity. That he did not issue that order is to my mind very plain, for if he had done so, he would have had the same power that gave the order, to authorize him to withdraw it; but it seems he felt that he had not, for immediately upon taking his command as Lieutenant General, he applied to Beauregard to get the order countermanded, as will be seen by the following correspondence. Gen. Hampton writes to Gen. Beauregard as follows:

April 22, 1866.

"Gen. Sherman having charged me in his official report with the destruction of Columbia, and having reiterated the same falsehood in a recent letter to Bejamin Rawls of that city, may I beg you to state such facts in reference to this matter as are in your possession. If you recollect, I advised you on the morning the Yankees came in, not to burn the cotton as this would endanger the town. I stated that as they had destroyed the railroad they could not remove the cotton. Upon this representation you directed me to issue an order that the cotton should not be burned. This I did at once, and there was not a bale on fire when the Yankees came into the town. You

saw the cotton as you left the city, and you can state that none was on fire.

Very respectfully yours,

W. H.

To Gen. Beauregard.

To which Gen. Beauregard returned the following answer endorsed on the letter:

N. O., May 2, 1866.

The above statement of Gen. Hampton relative to the order issued by me at Columbia, S. C., not to burn the cotton in that city is perfectly true and correct. The only thing on fire at the time of the evacuation was the depot building of the S. C. R. R., which caught fire accidentally from the explosion of some ammunition ordered to be sent towards Charlotte, N. C.

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

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I have thus fairly shown that Gen. Hampton gave no such order to fire the cotton as Sherman states, nor was its burning attributable to any of his men, or the citizens; but, that it originated from the acts of Serman's own men, and probably from the very ones who had been detailed for the purpose, and felt that they were performing an acceptable service to their General. I will also state here a part of a conversation which took place between Gen. Howard and Mr. Shand on the burning of Columbia, to which I have elsewhere alluded, and will use the very words spoken. Gen. Howard expressed his regret at the occurrence and added the following words: "Though Gen. Sherman did not order the burning of the town, yet somehow or other the men had taken up the idea that if they destroyed the capital of South Carolina, it would be peculiarly gratifying to Gen. Sherman." Mr. Shand continues:

"The fire was wholly put out by 1 o'clock P. M., and from that hour until between 7 and 8 o'clock P. M., there was no other fire in the city, and the burning of said cotton, therefore, had nothing to with the subsequent conflagration and destruction of the town. At the hour last mentioned rockets were seen to ascend and immediately thereafter a fire broke

out in a central portion of the city near the market, and the wind being still exceedingly high, it soon assumed alarming proportions. I stood in my front piazza watching it with much anxiety and though inclined at first to regard its origin as accidental, I was soon undeceived. The fire occured, as I said, in a central part of the city and to the north of my residence, but I had been looking upon it but for a short time when I noticed fresh flames bursting out in the east, west and south, at points very distant from each other and not possibly caused by the communication of flames from one to the other. The revelry of soldiers in the streets and their shouts and exultation, as fresh rockets went up, and fresh buildings took fire, scenes, which to some extent, came under my own observation, added to the awful character of the occasion and gave rise to the painful impression that the city was doomed to desolation and ruin; a fact which was admitted and boasted of by some of the soldiers themselves. By midnight the whole city presented one vast sheet of flames, and in the midst, and during the progress of the appalling calamity, might be heard above all other noise, the demoniac and gladsome shouts of the soldiery." He further speaks of efforts made to burn his house, their success and their brutal treatment of himself and robbery of the church plate, etc.

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Sherman says "the whole of Wood's division was brought in, but it was found impossible to check the flames which by midnight had become unmanageable and raged until about 4 A. M., when the wind subsiding, they were got under control." All correct, except one little item, viz.: That Wood's division was not called in until between three and four, and they did not fail, but arrested it immediately. Gen. Sherman has been very forgetful of hours in this statement; Wood's division was not called in until morning, and their being called in arose from a little incident which I will presently mention. Conyngham bears me out in the assertion. He says "this scene continued until near morning, and then the town was cleared out, when there was nothing more to pillage or burn." Sherman says, "I was up nearly all night, and saw Gens.

Howard, Logan, Wood and others, laboring to save houses, etc." I do not question there were many circumstances calculated to render Sherman's rest disturbed, but why he and Howard and Logan and Wood should have tried to save houses rather mystifies me. Sherman had ordered the place to be burnt—Howard was carrying it out—Logan was in favor of the measure, and after he had left Columbia, declared, if it was to be done again, that he would do it more effectually. He also ordered Preston's house to be destroyed. Wood, it would seem, had the command of the forces about the town; and the Yankee writers state, could have prevented, or have arrested it at any time had he thought proper.

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That Sherman ordered the destruction of the city, his soldiers did not hesitate to aver. As soon as they came in, they stated that the city would be burned. That it was settled on the other side of the river between the officers and themselves. That a signal would be given, and then the citizens would "see hell." Gen. Sherman says he disclaims "on the part of my army, any agency in this fire;" but on the contrary, claims that "we saved what of Columbia remains unconsumed."

After the facts, which I have just stated, I think it will be difficult for any one to give credit to the disclaimer. But as to the saving of what is left of Columbia unconsumed, there is no question that he is entitled to that credit, for after the signal rockets, and until Wood's division was called in, between three and four in the morning, the city was burning with fearful rapidity; while after the order was given to Andrews, and the bugles' sound called the incendiaries from their work of infamy, all became changed. The fire was arrested; no more houses were ignited; and the destruction of the place ceased. Sherman therefore did put an end to the fire, and certainly saved, by his order, "the remnant of the once rich and flourishing city." But subsequent events tended to show that he regretted his fit of benevolence. There can be but little doubt that there was an intention to burn the balance when they left; McGregor's house was fired at 4 o'clock, P. M., on Saturday. Latta's and English's were destroyed on Sunday. Preston's

house was ordered for the closing scene on Monday, as soon as Gen. Logan should leave; and its destruction was only prevented by an accidental circumstance. Maj. Fitzgibbon, who felt interested in the condition of the nuns, called on and asked if he could assist them. They stated that they had Sherman's promise of protection. He inquired if it was in writing; they replied no, it was only a verbal promise. He urged them to have a written one and offered to carry their request if they would write a letter to Sherman. He was so urgent, and as he stated that the night would be one of horrors, that they wrote to Gen. Sherman, Fitzgibbon, carried the note, and brought them back a written protection, together with guards for their property. His language indicated his belief that the destruction of the city would be effected that night. Sherman's protection, however, did not assist them. Their establishment was destroyed, and they and their helpless charge of young girls spent the night in the church yard. Some ladies seeing their condition, called on Sherman, represented their condition, and urged upon him to render them assistance. He called in the morning, saw the Mother Superior, expressed his deep regret at their loss and troubled condition, stated that it arose from no act of his, that the conflagration resulted from the liquor which his soldiers had obtained; that they had become intoxicated and unmanageable; and concluded by offering to give them any house in Columbia they might choose to select for their establishment.

He desired his Adjutant, Col. Charles Ewing, to attend to their wants and see that they were made comfortable. That gentleman called often and tried to render their situation more pleasant, and on the eve of his departure, he introduced Capt. Cornyn, the commissary, to them, who was to arrange with them as to their rations. In the course of the conversation, Ewing reminded them of Gen. Sherman's offer to give them any house they would select and urged them to accept it; they replied they had thought of it, and would select Gen. Preston's house as being the largest in the town. Ewing replied "that is where Gen. Logan holds his headquarters; and that house is ordered to be burned. I know that it will be burned tomor-

row; but, if you will say that you will take it, I will see the General (he was Sherman's brother-in-law) and get the order countermanded." On the next morning, Capt. Cornyn called and told the nuns that the army was moving in haste, and that Gen. Sherman had left the city about four in the morning. They asked if he could tell them whether the order to burn the house had been countermanded or one given for them to take possession. He could not. After many inquiries, they found that Gen. Perry had the command of the place, and that his orders were to burn the house at a certain hour, unless they, the nuns, were in absolute possession; but he sent them word if but a part of them came in he would spare it for their sake. Two of them moved in and found the fires all prepared and everything in readiness to burn or blow up the building. The negroes were moving out the bedding, blankets, etc., before it should be destroyed. Here then is rather positive proof that Gen. Sherman paid no respect to his pledge concerning private property. He had pledged himself to the Mayor that person and property should be respected, but here, two days after they had held the city, without any reason that could be assigned, he orders a large and costly house to be burnt, simply because he had the power to show his authority and vent his spleen. Other houses were burnt at the time that was destroyed, and we have reason, therefore, to suppose that the man who ordered the one, had also given directions for the other.

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The Rev. William Yates states: "I was in the yard when that fatal rocket went up and one of the men exclaimed 'now you will see hell.' I asked him what it meant, and his reply was: 'That is the signal for a general setting of fire to the city,' and immediately after numbers of fires could be seen in every direction." This was at Gen. Blair's headquarters and from one of his men. Mr. Shand saw them attempt to fire one of his out-houses, and saw them destroy the cotton. Mr. Oliver saw them set fire to Mrs. Law's house, turn Mr. Reckling's wife and child out of his home, and fire it, and also witnessed their firing the cotton. Alderman Stork saw them

fire the cotton in the street and also witnessed the destruction of Bates' and Oliver's house. They told Capt. Stanley that they would "give them hell to night;" that they would burn the city, and that the arrangements were all made over the river before they came in. Capt. Shand was the Captain of one of the fire companies, and whilst working at the fire in the rear of the Commercial Bank, fifteen or twenty armed soldiers forcibly took possession of the hose, stuck their bayonets into them, carried off the pipes, and beat in the air vessels of the engine. He saw soldiers set fire to the Mutual Supply Association Store. Capt. Pratt, who came in with the Mayor and Col. Stone, told Alderman McKenzie, who showed him some cotton, that he wished he had burnt it and saved them the trouble as they "never left any of that." Mr. McKenzie, as captain of one of the fire companies worked at the burning cotton about half past eleven, and continued to do so, until it was completely extinguished. He also assisted in arresting the fire at the jail, which he thinks was fired by one of the inmates. His firm conviction is that the city was fired by Sherman's men and through his directions. Mr. Bedell states that the Yankees set fire to his dwelling house, and that all he could do, could not prevent them from effecting their purpose of burning it. Mrs. McDonald saw the Yankee soldiers break open Mr. Pelham's door and fire his house; Mrs. Squiers saw the teamsters set fire to the cotton opposite DeSausure's; she and her family put it out; that was about half past five in the afternoon. She saw the rockets go up, and immediately after, fires were to be seen in every direction. She confirms what others state, that Bates and Oliver's establishments were fired in the rear, and the fire from those houses spread to the opposite side of the street. Her own house was fired by cotton steeped in turpentine, placed on rods and put upon the roof. Mrs. Friedeberg's house and DeSausure's were all fired about the same time. Mr. Altee says he saw the Yankee soldiers going about and firing the houses on Bridge street and near his own—They twice fired his, but he was fortunate enough to get it extinguished. In one case, it is probable that the enemy would have added murder to their other crimes. A sergeant

and three privates went to the residence of F. G. DeFontaine, Esq., the editor of the Daily South Carolinian, and demanded of the servants where he was to be found. The latter being unable to give the information, one of the men replied—damn him, its well for him that he isn't here, for we'd burn him in his den. Then, after ransacking the library, papers, etc., with a lighted candle they ignited the wood work on the place and left it to burn.

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A gentleman of Columbia called upon Sherman on the night of the fire to get a guard for the protection of his family and house which was much exposed. He could not see Sherman, but met with Capt. Merrill, who told him that Sherman had given orders to admit no one, and that his seeing him would make no difference, for "Sherman did not care a damn if the whole city was in ashes." I will now bring this article to a close, after making a few remarks on the burning of the gas works by Gen. Howard under, I may say, the express orders of Gen. Sherman, for such it had every appearance to have been. Mr. Jas. G. Gibbes heard that the gas works were to be burnt. As this was altogether private property, could have no bearing on the conduct of the war and was not a building useful in war to an enemy; as Gen. Sherman had promised protection to all private property—colleges, schools, harmless houses, etc., it was thought that such an establishment ought not to be injured, and that having deprived the citizens of their arms, wood, water, provisions, and every means of procuring, them by the burning of all the mills and the stealing of all the wagons and horses, they might at least have light spared to them, to enable them to take care of their children who had been so cruelly thrown out of their homes and deprived of every necessary. This gentleman hearing that Gen. Howard had the ordering of its destruction went to him, and remonstrated with him upon the cruelty of such a measure; depicted the distress it would occasion, and the utter wantonness of destroying such a building. Howard replied that he saw no reason why that should not be burnt as well as the other buildings. He was then requested to postpone its firing

until Sherman could be appealed to; he told him he would see Sherman himself; the gentleman asked permission to go with him, as he, Gen. Howard, being in favor of burning, he would not be likely to prove a warm advocate; he declined permission, but said he would see Sherman and try and get the order countermanded. After such a promise we presume he did call on Sherman and endeavor to change his determination. The gas works were however burnt, and we have a right to presume that Sherman gave the order for their destruction, and refused to countermand it. He therefore violated his pledge of protection to the citizen and his property, and committed an act of as wanton destruction as ever was done by man. The burning of those works, the order to burn Preston's house, the destruction of Mrs. English's, Latta's and hosts of other houses and the utter devastation of the whole country from Columbia to North Carolina, makes him one of the most ruthless invaders that ever cursed the earth by his presence. Attila or Alaric shrink into insignificance when compared with him; and Nichols was right in saying "that you will in vain search history for a parallel to the scathing and destructive effect of the invasion of the Carolinas." I have elsewhere shown that neither Sherman nor any of his officers had attributed the burning of the city to aught else than the inebriation of the soldiers; and up to the 4th of April, the date of his report to the Secretary of War, no accusation had been made against Hampton. That the charge then brought forward was an after thought, all the antecedents tend to prove. He spoke of the burning as arising from the intoxication of his men—yet on his route through the country, after leaving Columbia, he carried out the system he commenced at the bridges below, and kept up during his march to the capital. In his letter to Wheeler he avows his intention to burn all the cotton, and also his utter disregard as to what became of the dwellings of the planters. (See Wheeler's letter to Howard and Sherman's reply.) To talk of empty houses was ridiculous; from necessity, those houses could have no occupants, though the furniture and slaves evidenced their being cared for, and in fact inhabited. In his letter to Hampton of the

27th of February, relative to the prisoners being shot, etc., he makes no allusion to Columbia; and when Hampton replied, denying all knowledge of any prisoners who were shot after having been taken, he charges Sherman with having burned the city of Columbia after he had peaceable possession of it, and of other matter contrary to the usage of civilized nations. To this charge Gen. Sherman never replied. At that time he, the great conqueror, never dreamed of being assailed; but, to his astonishment, he found the reverse. At that time he rather looked upon the burning of Columbia as the crowning act of his glory, and for the destruction of our capital he expected something like deification; nor did he awake from his delusion until the rude act of the Secretary of War aroused him from his reverie, and he began to think that he had carried his desire of vengeance too far, and it would be advisable that some cause should be shown to the Government why such an atrocity had been perpetrated. It was then he thought of the order he had seen, made his arrangements accordingly, and became satisfied that the city was fully on fire before he gave the order to burn it down through the destruction of the public buildings. Posterity will not be as blind as the present race; their passions will not be excited, and they will acknowledge that Carolina fought, and nobly fought, for a right that she and all the States were entitled to, and had ever claimed; and that, in the infamous desire to crush out her love of liberty and State sovereignty the demon of centralization has been unchained, which, like the tiger, revelled in blood and destruction, and would continue so to do until nothing of liberty or civil rights was left to the consolidated, but enslaved nation.

I trust that I have answered Conyngham's question; removed the slander attempted to be cast on Gen. Hampton by Sherman and his satellites; proved that Tecumseh Sherman was the incendiary, and he, and he alone, is responsible for the terrible destruction that has been occasioned, and the retarding of prosperity for the next fifty years. To his God I now leave the miserable wretch, in the full belief that he will meet with such punishment as his atrocious acts have merited.

Having finished with Gen. Sherman and his *fetes* of arson,

let me turn to a few remarks of Maj. Nichols, in which, contrary to good taste, as well as civility and truth, he attempts to libel the character of the Carolinians. Let me review the statements and the comments he has ventured to indulge in, and I think they will tend fully to portray, not only a vile animus, but a miserable baseness of mind. I cannot leave the subject without exhibiting some of his wondrous qualities and gifts.

A portion of what he narrates, he has seen and heard. But when he gives such a description of Hampton, as he has done on page 311, we are compelled to say that he was not acquainted with the man. Of all persons whom I have ever known, and I have known him since infancy, he is the most uniform and imperturbable in his temper. No one ever saw him give way to passion; his face is one of remarkable quietude and repose, and he is rather reticent than otherwise. In his manner there is a calmness and serenity that strikes every one as the predominant characteristic, and a cheerful beaming of the eye that makes the countenance agreeable. You may see determination to do what he considers a duty; but you need never expect to see restless anxiety or fuss. He is the last being to whom we should have expected such terms to be applied as "fanfaronade," etc. Nichols certainly made a mistake here, and had his friend Kilpatrick in his mind when he drew that picture. He must have recollected the appearance of that officer as Bombastes Furioso, challenging Wheeler out to fight and imagined that he saw "le petit General," with a flag in his hand, calling over to Wheeler's men, in stentorian voice, "Come out now, you set of cowardly skunks; you claim that you whip Kilpatrick every time, come out now and try it; and I'll not leave enough of you to thrash a corporal's guard. I am Kill himself." We almost looked for the boots and the well-known distich and supposed they might have been hung up, if they had not been lost in some of his hurried movements; such as occurred when surprised by Hampton, and in dishabille, he ran for the woods, leaving his Yankee doxy to follow as she could. There are several other remarks of Nichol's that ought to be noticed. Several soldiers were found

on the road-side, who had been killed, either by the citizens or by Confederate soldiers. They belonged to a gang who had been firing and pillaging the country in every direction, and simply met the fate they deserved. The virtuous indignation of the Generals is aroused and Sherman gives Kilpatrick orders to hang and shoot prisoners who fall into his hands, to any extent he considers necessary. Nichol's fired on the occasion, calls out: "Shame on Beauregard and Hampton and Butler," and asks, "Has the blood of their father's become so corrupted that the sons are cowardly assassins. If this murderous game is continued by their friends, they will bitterly rue the day it was begun." Without knowing why or wherefore those men were punished, an order is given for the hanging of the prisoners, though Sherman, when alluding to the circumstance, acknowledges that his foragers committed many acts of atrocity. To the question as to the corruption of the blood of the fathers leaving the sons assassins, I have only to say, if Nichols wishes an answer, he need only ask the question personally, and he can test the condition of consanguinity. Men who have been employed in burning up the country, robbing the houses and turning out the families, to burn their dwellings, are to pass unmolested, because they wear the blue uniform of Sherman's thieves; but when a rebel soldier fires on one of their officers, although as he states, the poor wretch harmed no one, he was hanged at once for his attempted assassination; a fit commentary upon the statement made above.

* * * * * * *

To make a fair exhibit of the feelings of Gen. Sherman on the subject of firing cotton, etc., I will quote that irritable, snappish letter of his to Gen. Wheeler, in which he exhibits neither propriety nor decorum nor common civility to his second in command, Gen. Howard. The letter was addressed by Wheeler to Howard, but was replied to by Sherman, and as his historian writes, "To this Gen. Sherman chose to reply himself, in the following characteristic terms." Wheeler's was a civil, gentlemanly request that the wanton destruction of property should cease, and the reply should have been in the same strain, and not in Sherman's characteristic insolence.

On the 7th of February, ten days before Gen. Sherman entered Columbia, Gen. Wheeler addressed a letter to Gen. Howard on the subject of wantonly destroying the property not necessary for their sustenance. He writes thus:

Grahams, S. C., Feb. 7, 1865.

General: I have the honor to propose that if the troops of your army be required to discontinue burning the houses of our citizens, I will discontinue burning cotton. As an earnest of the good faith in which my proposition is tendered, I leave at this place about 300 bales of cotton unburned, worth in New York over a quarter of a million of dollars and in our currency one and a half million. I trust my having commenced will cause you to use your influence to insure the acceptance of the proposition by your whole army. I trust that you will not deem it improper for me to ask that you will require the troops under your command to discontinue the wanton destruction of property not necessary for their sustenance.

Respectfully, Gen., your obedient servant,

J. WHEELER, Maj Gen., C. S. A.

MAJ-GEN. HOWARD, U. S. A., etc.

To this letter Gen. Sherman chose to reply himself, (as the writer says) in "the following characteristic terms:"

H Q., Mil Div., Miss , In the Field, Feb. 8, 1865.

General: Yours addressed to Gen. Howard is received by me. I hope you will burn all cotton, and save us the trouble. We don't want it, and it has proven a curse to our country. All you don't burn I will. As to private houses occupied by peaceful families, my orders are not to molest or disturb them, and I think that my orders are obeyed. Vacant houses, being of no use to anybody, I care little about, as the owners have thought them of no use to themselves. I don't want them destroyed, but do not take much care to preserve them.

I am, with respects, yours, etc.,

W. T. SHERMAN.

EXTRACTS FROM ACCOUNT WRITTEN BY CAPT. U. R. BROOKS.

* * * * * * *

Gen. Sherman had his headquarters in Gervais street, between Pickens and Henderson, at the residence now owned by Mr. J. L. Mimnaugh, while Gen. John A. Logan occupied the Preston mansion. Gen. Logan, in ante-bellum days, had been charged by the Hon. William C. Preston, while in Washington, with being an "Indian half breed." The impression was then, and is to this day, believed true.

During the mess dinner hour at the "old mansion" Gen. Logan turned to the venerable ante-bellum butler of the Hampton and Preston families and remarked:

"Henry, what would William C. Preston say could he know that the feet of the 'half-breed Indian Logan' rested under his mahogany?"

Old Henry dared not answer, devoted as he was to that house, the family, and the traditions dating back to the days when his master, Maj. Gen. Wade Hampton, of the old army, entertained once gentlemen comrades at that same board. Old Henry had been "faithful among the faithless"—and though a rope had been placed around his neck more than once, to make him reveal hidden treasure, yet no information could be obtained, and this old negro remained steadfast to the end of the ordeal.

In the testimony before the mixed commission on British and American claims in Washington, D. C., 1872, volume entitled, "Who Burnt Columbia?" published by Walker, Evans & Cogswell, Charleston, S C., February 17th, 1865, page 97, there are found the following interesting passages:

TESTIMONY OF GEN. SHERMAN.

Question. "Do you not believe--I do not want what people told you—but do you not believe that individuals assisted in spreading that conflagration?"

Answer. Sherman on oath. "Yes, sir, after it had been started there was a little circumstance which occurred at the beginning, while I was still at the Pontoon bridge, that I will mention right here. I received a note from a Sister of Charity who kept an asylum or school in Columbia, alleging the fact that she was a teacher in a school in Brown County, Ohio, where my daughter, Minnie, was a pupil, and by reason of that she claimed protection to her school and property. I think I sent one of my staff officers, Col. Ewing, to assure her that there was no purpose to disturb her or the property of anybody in Columbia. I have since heard that she claimed that I passed my word guaranteeing to her protection on which she had based a claim for indemnification, etc. Now, of course, I did not want that school burnt with a parcel of little children. I went myself to see her afterwards; that is what I am getting at. The next day after the conflagration I went and found them all clustered in an adjoining house and gave orders that they should have possession of some Methodist establishment, which happened to be vacant, and which would serve as a shelter until they could procure another place. Their schoolhouse was burned down in the great conflagration of the night before."

It is true that Gen. Sherman's daughter, Miss Minnie, did go to the convent in Brown County, Ohio; it is true that the Mother Superior, (whom he calls the Sister of Charity in his testimony,) wrote the note asking for protection, and it is true that the Mother Superior did not get the promised protection.

EXTRACTS FROM CASE OF J. J. BROWNE VS. UNITED STATES.

Deposition of William D. Stanley.

* * * * * * *

8th. Were you in Columbia on the night of the burning?

A. Yes, sir.

9th. By what means was the city burned?

A. By Gen. Sherman's army of the United States troops. I saw a man, with the uniform of a United States soldier on enter the store of Mr. Robert Bryce, on the block immediately opposite where Mr. Browne kept his store, and with a fire-brand about four feet in length, wrapped on one end with canvass, put fire to the store of Mr. Bryce under the roof. All the buildings in that neighborhood were destroyed on both sides of the street. Previous to the general conflagration, I saw a number of soldiers pass me with tin cans and balls of cotton tied up with cord. In an hour or two the city was in flames. * * * A United States soldier told me himself that he set fire to Col. Clarkson's house. The United States soldiers were then all over the city. They appeared to have selected the northwest corner of every square on Main street, in the city, and fire broke out simultaneously from different portions of the city. The wind blew strong from the northwest at the time. Houses standing in detached grounds of from three to forty acres were burned at the same time. There were no other soldiers in the city at the time except the United States soldiers under Gen. Sherman. * * * A United States officer, who was a perfect gentleman, who was sick in my store, told me that the city of Columbia would be burned that night, which was the night of the 17th of February, 1865, and also explained to me the signals which would be used. I then sent for the mayor of the city and informed him of the fact. While standing in front of my place of business,

Gen. Sherman, with a portion of his staff, was passing and the mayor stopped them and told him that he had heard that the town would be burned that night. Gen. Sherman replied: "Mr. Mayor, you can go home and make yourself perfectly easy; your city and citizens are just as safe as if there was not a Federal soldier within a thousand miles They shall be protected if it takes an entire corps of my army. I will avail myself of some day when the wind is not so high to destroy the Confederate property." He then rode on. On that night, notwithstanding this assertion, I looked out for the signals of which I had been informed by the sick officer and saw them. Immediately after the signals the fire commenced at the northwest corner of every square on the main street. Before this the cotton had been set on fire in the middle of the street, but put out by the fire department. About 3 o'clock, on the morning of the 18th, Gen. Sherman ordered his fire brigade to proceed to stop the fire and prevent its further extension. Very soon thereafter the fire stopped.

W. B. STANLEY.

Sworn to and subscribed before me, this the 7th day of February, 1872.

ALBERT M BOOZER,
U. S. Commissioner Circuit and District Courts
for District of South Carolina

Deposition of Milo H. Berry.

* * * * * * *

I was in Columbia in February, 1865, when the city was burned. The first fire I saw, which was close to me, was set on fire by soldiers. I did not see the petitioner's store burned, but suppose it was burned in the general conflagration. The place I saw set on fire was set on fire by soldiers wearing the uniform of United States soldiers. This was on the 17th of February, 1865. On the morning of the 17th of February, when the army of Gen Sherman entered, I came into the city, when I found that a committee of citizens had gone to surrender the city to Gen. Sherman. This was about 8 A. M. Directly after, about 10 or 11 o'clock, A. M., the

army entered. After the army came in, about 12 o'clock, I came down street to the old market, on the main street. There was cotton out in the street near the Court House. The wind commenced blowing a lively breeze, and the cotton took fire. The soldiers ran for the fire engines, when I met one of the firemen and told him to open the engine house and told him to run out the hose carriage, that they did not need an engine. The citizens and soldiers ran out the hose carriage and put the fire out. I did not see any more fire until about 9 or 10 o'clock that night, and this was the warehouse before mentioned. According to my best belief I presume there were one hundred bales in the street. The cotton was strewn along the centre of the main street for a considerable distance; the cotton was in bales. The wind kept freshening up all the afternoon. My observation in regard to cotton burning is, that it burns like a live coal; it does not blaze when packed. The last time I saw the pile of cotton mentioned was about 12 M. on the 17th. I think there were other piles of cotton in the street, but I am not certain in regard thereto, nor can I tell whether or not other cotton was burned, except the first above mentioned. About 5 o'clock of the morning of the 18th, or before, a guard was sent to me. I had, however, procured a guard before. I cannot say whether or not Gen. Sherman's army, or any portion thereof, acted as an organized body in an effort to subdue the flames. Gen. Hampton's troops left in the morning previous to the burning. They left fully four hours before I saw the cotton burning as before stated. M. H. BERRY.

Deposition of William Glaze.

* * * * * * *

I witnessed the burning of Columbia. I know that the city was destroyed by Gen. Sherman's army, because they were in the city at the time, and I saw persons in the uniform of the United States soldiers setting fire to the city in various places. I saw two such persons fire Mr. Phillips' auction warehouse. They opened the door and threw balls, which they had set on fire, into the building, and in less than twenty minutes the

building was in flames. This building was diagonally across from the petitioner's store. It occurred about 7 o'clock, P. M. All that part of the city caught directly after that—in about one-half of an hour. I saw several other houses fired, and among them my own building. I am speaking now of what I saw myself. I saw a building back of the old City Hotel fired by balls by persons wearing similar uniforms, whom I know to be United States soldiers, for they came into my own house. They burned my machine shop. There were about one hundred soldiers there at the time. They broke up the machinery and then set fire thereto; not, however, by balls as aforesaid, but by the broken boxes, etc., and oil poured on. In the course of a half an hour the conflagration became general. Most of the burning was done from that time until about 3 o'clock next morning. I was a member of the city council at the time, and went with the mayor to Gen. Sherman, when Gen Sherman promised the mayor that there would be no burning that night. I saw no efforts on the part of the United States soldiers to subdue the fire; but, on the other hand, I saw them endeavoring to spread it, and heard some of them remark that it was not half enough. It was on my way home from our conference with Gen. Sherman that I saw Mr. Phillips' warehouse fired. I saw a sky-rocket sent up from the State House yard, where the headquarters of Gen. Sherman were, which I took to be the signal for the burning of the city, for immediately thereafter the fire burst out all over the city. Soldiers had been stationed at different points

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in the meantime W. M. GLAZE.

Sworn to and subscribed before me, this 18th day of March, A. D, 1872. ALBERT M. BOOZER,

U S. Commissioner for District of South Carolina.

Deposition of John McKenzie.

* * * * * * *

I witnessed the burning of Columbia, on the main or Richardson street. My own residence was burned It must have been burned by hands of persons, and not by accident. I was a

great part of the time about the fire on that night. * * * Between 9 and 10 o'clock that night (night of the 17th of February) I observed fires on the western side and eastern side of Richardson street, toward the State House. About that time I saw fires out of the city, apparently three or four, or perhaps six or eight miles distant, and in the suburbs. * * * Soon the fires became general—there were fires in the different parts of the city. We left the main street and went on the back street to Brennan & Cassell's carriage factory, thinking we could there prevent the fire from proceeding on in the back of the city; but there I gave it up, as the hands left. I saw soldiers during the time rushing about in and out of the stores. I noticed that after they came out several times, fires would soon break out from the store entered; but I did not see any of them put fire to any building, nor did I see them carrying torches; they did not aid me at night in stopping the fire; I have been for many years president of a fire company; I have been connected with the fire department for thirty years. From my experience therein, I judge that the fire was the work of incendiaries and not of accident.

I explain this in this way: The fires occurred in twenty or thirty different places at the same time, and so far from each other that they could not have been connected. United States troops told me, in my store in the morning, that I would "see hell tonight;" that they woulon't leave one store upon another.

The parties who made the remarks were United States troops and belonged to Gen. Sherman's army.

JOHN McKENZIE.

Sworn to, etc.

Deposition of Alfred Huger.

I am eighty-four years of age; reside in Charleston; I was postmaster at Charleston before the war, and I had held the office for thirty years; I was in Columbia in February, 1865; I was there when the Federal troops entered the town.

I had conversations with several officers, and with one who was called Captain; I don't remember his name. I had a good

deal of conversation with him; and a day or two after the fire this Captain said, in answer to my question as to who had fired Columbia, "We did it." His saying so only confirmed my own impression. If he had said anything else it would not have shaken my belief and impression; and previously to the fire the general impression in the town was that Columbia was to be burned. Nobody was surprised when the fire broke out; and in consequence of this general impression, I had taken what precautions I could to secure my family. I had conversation, at several times, with two private soldiers, named Goodman and Elliott. They stated that the fire had been done by the army. ALFRED HUGER.

Deposition of Orlando Z. Bates.

To int. 1st. Orlando Z. Bates, aged 58 years, Columbia, South Carolina, merchant.

To int. 3d. The city was in the possesion of Gen. Sherman's army after 10 or 11 A. M. on that day. Gen. Sherman was in command of that army, I saw him on the day as he entered the city and passed along the main street at the head of the main body of the army. I was at that time one of the aldermen of the city of Columbia, and on the morning of the 17th of February, A. D., 1865, was informed that the Board of Aldermen would meet at 6 o'clock, A. M. Attended, and was informed by the Mayor of the city that the city was about to be evacuated by the Confederate troops, and that it would be surrendered to the army of Gen. Sherman In company with the Mayor, Hon. T. J. Goodwyn, and Alderman McKenzie and Stork, I proceeded to the outskirts of the city and met the advance guard of the Federal army, under command of Col. Stone, to whom the Mayor tendered the surrender of the city, informing Col. Stone that there were no troops of the Confederate army in the city, and that the population was chiefly old men and women and children. Col. Stone accepted the surrender and deponent and the persons already named, accompanied by Col. Stone, returned into the city about 12 or 1 o'clock when I observed a number of scattered Federal soldiers already in the city. There was no alarm of fire and no burning

of any description previous to the occupation already stated. The conflagration commenced after the entry of the United States forces.

To int. 4. A large portion of the city was destroyed by fire during the day and night of the 17th February, 1865, and on the following day. I was in the city, and was at various points in that portion which was destroyed at the time of the burning, and saw the burning as it progressed. I saw the burning of several houses in the portion of the city lying between Main street and the gas works, at about twilight on the 17th. A little later, the store on Main street, occupied by an Aid Association as a depot of supplies for Confederate hospitals, near the corner of Plain street, was set on fire. I was present with the fire company, aiding to extinguish it, and saw Federal soldiers sticking bayonets into the engine hose and cutting the same with hatchets and knives. The hose and carriage was finally demolished, and the engine rendered unserviceable by the soldiers. These fires preceded the general conflagration. I will also state that a quantity of cotton had been brought out of the cellars of stores, where it had been kept, on the east side of Main street, between Washington and Main streets, and piled in the middle of the street. As the troops passed it, I saw the cotton fired by them striking matches and applying. The cotton thus fired was kept from spreading by Mr. McKenzie, the captain of the Independent Fire Company, having a hose attached to the hydrant at that point, and keeping a stream constantly playing upon it. This was during the afternoon of the 17th February. At about 8 or 9 o'clock P. M. on the 17th February, I saw several rockets ascend from some point near the State House. Shortly after this my store, which was on Main street, a few doors south of the market, was set on fire, and immediately after this I saw fires arising in various parts of the city, and in a very short time nearly the whole of Richardson or Main street was in flames. I saw several instances of Federal soldiers actually applying fire to buildings, and others carrying torches in various parts of the city for the same purpose. I conversed freely with the soldiers of General Sherman's army, both at the time of the burning and afterwards,

and no one ever denied the act, but several expressed regret that the entire city was not destroyed. I saw numbers of them at the scenes of the burning, giving expression to demonstrations of satisfaction by dancing and otherwise.

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At the time I returned into the city, after surrendering the city to Colonel Stone, there was a strong breeze blowing from a westerly direction. When the wind did not carry the fire, I saw United States soldiers carry the fire by torches, and apply it to the buildings which were not then burning. I am unable to state of my own knowledge who started the fire in the first instance.

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Deposition of J. G. Gibbes.

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The city was surrendered to General Sherman about 10 o'clock in the morning of Friday, the 17th February, by Dr. Thomas Jefferson Goodwin, the mayor, about one mile from the limits of the town; he rode out to meet the army coming in, and the forces entered the city and took possession just at 11 o'clock; I noticed the clock myself as the first van arrived; no resistance was offered to General Sherman or his army; most of the Confederate troops left early on Friday morning; the rear guard, under General P. B. Young, of General Hampton's command, left just as the Federal troops were entering; no riots, fire, or pillage had yet occurred on the 17th day; the first fire commenced about three hours after the first entering; about 10 o'clock an alarm of fire arose, caused by the burning of some cotton in Richardson street; it was set by the United States soldiers; my own impression is, that the fire was accidentally caused by a cigar being thrown into the cotton; the alarm of fire was started, the fire engine immediately began to play on it and subdued the flames; just about the time that it was extinguished, the United States soldiers began to riddle and cut up the hose with their bayonets; I was present immediately at the fire, which occurred just south of the market; there was no disorder, though the troops all seemed in a good

humor, and were laughing and jeering at those who had extinguished the flames, but opposed no resistance except a few drunken men cut up the hose, but the fire had already been extinguished.

Q. These drunken men were soldiers?

A. Yes, sir; and there was some sacking, but was not general; that is, between this fire and night; I saw several instances myself; my store, amongst the rest, was broken open by the soldiers; no officer present; about 7 o'clock in the evening three or four rockets were thrown up in the extreme northwestern portion of the town; immediately after that fire was seen in three different points in the northwestern part of the city; the flames spread rapidly from each of the quarters; there was a strong wind blowing from the northwestern towards the southwestern direction, which caused the general conflagration; there is no doubt but that the city was burned by the wind spreading the flames; but whenever they came to a vacant lot and the flames would have stopped, they were started on this side by the soldiers, who had inflammable materials, turpentine and cotton; I saw various of the soldiers with bottles, with some inflammable material; I supposed it to be turpentine, with which they made fire balls, and started the fire in buildings in that way. My father's house was burned by them after having escaped the general conflagration; it was a fire-proof building, and had escaped the flames; I saw them fire the furniture in the house; turn over the piano, tables, chairs, and starting the fire from lace curtains, which they lit from the gas lights; there was a crowd present at my father's house, who did his best to stop these proceedings but was powerless; I did not see anything of the transportation of merchandise in vehicles or otherwise; no restraint was put by the officers, and no effort at all made until Saturday morning; no patrol or provost guard was to be seen suppressing the proceedings; the signals sent up were those already described, which were the signals for firing the town about 7 o'clock in the evening.

* * * * * * *

Immediately after the rockets the fire started at three different points in the northwest part of the city, and extended

very rapidly in a southeasterly direction; it was done by soldiers of Gen. Sherman's army; efforts were rapidly made by the citizens; the engines were not turned out that night, because the hose had been cut when they were playing on the fire of the cotton at 1 o'clock in the day, therefore the engines were of no service, but there were buckets of water, and efforts were made to extinguish the flames by individuals until they were so interferred with by the soldiers that they found it useless and abandoned all efforts.

Q. Were the engines injured?

A. I think not, only the hose.

Q. Did you hear of any order, etc.?

A. I heard of no order; on the contrary, I have every reason to believe, from information derived from some of his own soldiers, that if the town was not actually destroyed by orders, the men fully understood that they would have license to do as they pleased; I can give my special reasons for saying that: for instance, a house belonging to me, occupied by Dr. Boozer, now physician of the penitentiary, was visited on Friday evening by United States soldiers, and in return for some kindness shown them by Mrs. Boozer, his wife, they kindly advised her to remove and conceal everything of value; that the town would be destroyed that night. She came to me and carried me to her house to see these men, who repeated in my presence these statements, but I could not believe it, and dissuaded her from any attempt to remove; I could not believe such a thing possible, but it turned out as they predicted.

Q. When were you appointed mayor?

A. The citizens had a meeting the morning after the fire and sent for me in the State House yard and begged me to take hold of the government of the city. * *

J. G. GIBBES.

Sworn to, etc.

Deposition of Charles F. Jackson.

Charles F. Jackson, a witness, being sworn, deposes and says:

I am a native of England. I was on Main street, in the

city of Columbia, on the occasion of the entry of the main army of Gen. Sherman, on the 17th of February, 1865. I witnessed the seventeenth army corps march through the main street, and was struck by the perfect order and equipment of the said corps. At the time the advanced corps were disbanded and breaking into and plundering the stores along their line of march, and though from the discipline of the said 17th corps, it would have been easy to have prevented this pillage, no attempt was made so to do. On the night following I witnessed United States soldiers with balls of combustible material, lighting them, and flinging them about the streets and over and under the houses, Federal officers at the same time mingling in the crowd. The conflagration of Columbia, I believe, could have been prevented, judging from the perfect discipline of the United States army when under orders, as I saw it on that day. Subsequent to the destruction of Columbia I saw a United States officer, whose name I do not now remember, who stated to me that the burning of Columbia was premeditated, and he stated to me that he had seen the plan of march as mapped out, and that Columbia was marked for conflagration, and that it was a general understanding in the army that Columbia was to be burned. He further stated that any statement made by Gen. Sherman to the contrary was a lie.

C. F. JACKSON.

[The counsel for the United States objects to the admission of any statement made to witness.]

DEPOSITION FOR DEFENCE.

Deposition of O. O. Howard.

The deposition of O. O. Howard, a witness produced, sworn and examined on the part and behalf of the United States in the cause above entitled, now depending before the above named commission, taken before me, a United States commissioner in and for the District of Columbia, at Washington, in said district, on the tenth day of December, 1872, pursuant to a notice to that effect duly given by the agent and counsel for the United States.

Mr. A. S. Worthington appeared on behalf of the United States; Messrs. George R. Walker, Bartley, Denver, Mackay, and Wells on behalf of claimants.

The said O. O. Howard, having been first by me duly sworn to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, deposes and says:

My name is O. O. Howard; my age is 42 years; my residence is District of Columbia; I am a native of Maine; my position is that of a General in the United States army.

Preliminary question propounded by the officer taking this deposition:

Have you any interest, direct or indirect, in the claim which is the subject-matter of the above entitled cause, or of this examination? If so, state the nature and extent of such interest.

Answer. I have no interest.

Being examined by Mr. Worthington, of counsel for the United States, the witness further deposes and says:

Q. State what your rank in the United States army was in February, 1865?

A. I was Major General of volunteers at that time; I think I was not a Brigadier General in the regular army until March following.

Q. What was your command in February, 1865?

L. of C.

A. I commanded the army of the Tennessee, constituting the right wing of Gen. Sherman's army.

Q. Operating in the State of South Carolina?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Please state the principal points through which your command passed in the march from Savannah to Goldsboro'.

A. The principal portion of my command was transported to Beaufort, South Carolina; thence [marched] northward through Pocotaligo, Orangeburg, Columbia, Cheraw, Fayetteville; subordinate columns swept into different towns; General Slocum had the left wing; he was at the north of me; mine was the right line of march.

Q. During the march under what orders from General Sherman were you acting in respect to private property?

A They were to take such provisions as were necessary for the subsistence of the army, but generally to spare private property, with some few exceptions; cotton was excepted; I was directly instructed again and again to destroy the cotton.

* * * * * * *

Q. On what day did you enter the town of Columbia yourself?

A. The 17th of February, 1865.

Q Please state, in your own way, your recollection of the circumstances attending the occupation of that city and the destruction of a portion of it?

A. On the 15th of February, in the vicinity of Columbia, opposite thereto, across the Congaree, we met with much resistance at Congaree creek, and had to push our way very slowly, the enemy retiring before us; when we arrived opposite Columbia we found the bridge across the Congaree destroyed by fire; we moved up to where the two rivers, the Saluda and the Broad, conjoined to form the Congaree; the bridge across the Saluda was destroyed by fire by the enemy; we bridged that and crossed our troops; the other bridge, when we reached the land intervening between the two rivers, was still standing, but as we attempted to cross it it was set on fire by the enemy, and, having been covered with rosin, was in flames in a moment, so that even the Confederate cavalry rushed northward

to save themselves, some of them without crossing; our troops spent the whole night in getting across the Broad, which was a very difficult river; we ferried over a brigade at the beginning by means of ropes and boats; that brigade was the brigade of Colonel Stone, and pushed its way up the hill slowly against the enemy, retiring; the enemy passed through Columbia, and the mayor came to the outside of the city and surrendered the city, I think between 10 and 11 o'clock, say 10 o'clock; in the meantime a regular bridge was laid across the Broad river, and General Sherman and myself crossed over, riding side by side, before any other troops from this leading brigade had passed; it was about half-past ten that General Sherman and I rode over ahead of all the remaining portion of the troops that had not been ferried over, and rode directly on to the city, a distance of about three miles, entering it in what we called the the main street; I believe the name as it appears on the map, is Richardson street; it was the one which led directly to the capitol; at every corner of the street we met crowds of people, principally negroes; not very far from the market house we met the mayor of the city, who had a short conversation with General Sherman; as my troops alone were to have charge of the city, I observed very carefully the disposition of the guards of the leading brigade, Colonel Stone's; sentinels were located in front of buildings of any considerable importance, and on the main street the principal portion of the brigade was in rest, waiting for orders; there was only that one brigade; we were ahead of all the rest; near the brigade was an immense pile of cotton, bales were broken open in the middle of the streets, and were on fire; an engine was playing upon the fire, and soldiers and citizens were engaged apparently in extinguishing it; General Sherman was met with much enthusiasm by a company of soldiers; observing them closely I saw that some of them were under the influence of drink.

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(Continued.) We rode to a foundry where guns had been cast, and observed that, and went afterwards through several streets together, when I separated from General Sherman, selected my headquarters, and gave the necessary orders for

the thorough care of the troops and of the city for the night; General Sherman took his headquarters at the house of Blanton Duncan and I mine at a house near the University, belonging to one of the professors, after this disposition I lay down to take a little rest, and was awaked first about dark by one of my aides, who said the city was on fire; I sent the aide, Captain Gilbreth, immediately to ascertain where the fire was and to call upon General Charles R. Woods, the division commander, who had the immediate command of the city, to prevent the extension of the fire; I then at once dressed myself and went to the scene; there I met General John A. Logan, who was my next in rank and who commanded the corps; we consulted together, and took every precautionary measure we could think of to prevent the extension of the flames, sometimes ordering the tearing down of sheds and small buildings, protecting the citizens, assisting them in the care of their property, and guarding it; much of the property was thrown into the streets; personally I set a great many soldiers, during the night, to extinguishing the flames from the houses, and they went to the top of the houses where water was passed up to them; nearly everything in my immediate vicinity was saved; a perfect gale from the northwest had commenced about the time we crossed the bridge, or before that and continued all night, or until, I should say, between two and three o'clock in the morning; it seemed at first utterly useless to attempt to stop the flames, they were so hot that many of our own soldiers were burnt up that night; when the wind changed, however, it was easy to prevent any further extension of the fire; it was done; some of our men behaved badly on account of being under the influence of drink, but they were replaced by fresh men as soon as their conduct came to the knowledge of the officer in charge; the first brigade —Stone's—was relieved by another brigade of General Wood's division, and finally the entire division of General Hazen was brought into the city to assist; all the men who misbehaved that we could seize upon were kept under guard until the next day and punished; there were quite a number of our men who had been taken prisoners and were held by the Confederates; they appeared in the streets of Columbia soon after our arrival;

I do not know myself where they were confined; the penitentiary was also opened and all its prisoners loosed; I found during the night a reckless mob very often, sometimes insulting ladies, and sometimes rushing into houses and pillaging; I did not see anybody setting fires; General Sherman himself stayed up with us for the most of the night; General Logan and Gen- Woods were on the ground all the time until the fire abated, and I believe did everything they could to prevent it. General Sherman's order to me to destroy certain classes of property is a part of our record, and I remember the tenor of it.

* * * * * * *

Q. State your recollection of it, General Howard.

A. It was that certain buildings of a public nature should be destroyed, such as arsenals, armories, powder-mills, depots; but that private property and asylums, so-called, should be protected; I saw that the wind was so high that it would be impossible to destroy that class of buildings by fire on the evening of the 17th of February, and therefore, refrained at that time from putting the order into practical execution On the 18th and 19th those buildings of that class that were left from the flames were destroyed. I have in my report an accurate list of them; the flames of this burning of the night of the 17th had destroyed a part of these other buildings included in the order. We destroyed also the railroad track. Though the order was to destroy cotton in South Carolina, yet no cotton remained that I know of after this fire to be destroyed; none was destroyed, according to my recollection.

* * * * * * *

Q. Do you know anything about some rockets having been sent up in the vicinity of the State House on the night of the 17th of February?

A. I do.

Q. State what you know about that?

A. The rockets were sent up by the signal corps; the left wing was quite a distance from us. General Blair's corps was located outside of the city, and one half of General Logan's, and it was customary for the signal officers attached to each division or corps to communicate with their neighbors as to

where they were, or to give any events of the day; they did it in the day time by flags, and at night by rockets, and this was done that night; the signals meant nothing else that I know of.

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Q. Do you know of any barns, cotton gins, mills, machinery, or any property of that nature, destroyed upon plantations on your line of march?

A. I do know of it.

Q. There was quite a large amount of it destroyed, was there not?

A. Yes, sir, quite considerable.

Q. Are you cognizant of the fact that large numbers of houses of private citizens were destroyed during that march?

A. Yes, sir, they were—a very large number.

Q. By troops of the United States?

A That I do not know, but I presume so; by soldiers.

Q. You presume they were destroyed by the troops of the United States?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Please state whether your experience was—

A. Let me modify my last answer; sometimes they were not destroyed by our troops; sometimes the Confederates destroyed them themselves prior to our coming; it was a curious thing that our troops and the Confederates were often destroying the same class of property; that was a curious fact that I remember distinctly, particularly in the case of that cotton you speak of.

Q Are you not aware that in parishes close to Pocotaligo there is scarce a dwelling house left from the ravages of the United States army?

A. Not altogether; no sir; but from both armies; I am perfectly aware of the desolation, and beheld it with my own eyes.

Q. Do you not believe a large portion of this destruction of private property to have been by troops of the United States?

A. No; I think the Confederates left us precious little.

Q. Of residences, I mean?

A. Well, residences; that one thing alone I could not say of

GEN. W. T. SHERMAN.

"Having utterly ruined Columbia the right wing began its march Northward, towards Winnsboro on the 20th."—*Sherman's Memoirs, vol. 2, page 288, Charles L. Webster & Co., New York, 1892.*

my own knowledge; you know that generally when our troops destroy private property, they were not ordered to destroy it.

Q. I ask you to state from your belief?

A. If you wish me to state what I know with reference to the absolute destruction, I know that I saw it; I saw chimneys standing with my own eyes after the houses were burned.

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Q. Were not most of the places through which you passed on your route to Columbia, through South Carolina destroyed by some one, you do not say whom?

A. No; not so; Midway, when I left it, was in good condition; Mr. Simms' property was left in good condition; I sent through General Blair and protected his library by a sentinel.

Q. But don't you know a great many that were destroyed?

A. I went over the country afterwards and it was pretty completely cleared out; I saw the chimneys and scarcely anything left in a great portion of the country (passing) through there; I went down through it, and that was what I observed.

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(The witness testifies here as to Orangeburg and Blackville.)

O. O. HOWARD.

Deposition of Wm. T. Sherman.

The deposition of Wm. T. Sherman, a witness produced, sworn, and examined on the part and behalf of the United States, in the cause above entitled, now depending before the above-named Commission, taken before me, James O. Clephane, United States Commissioner for the District of Columbia, at the city of Washington, D. C., on the 11th day of December, 1872, pursuant to a notice to that effect duly given by the agent and counsel of the United States.

* * * * * * *

Q. Please state whether in your march through South Carolina, you at any time authorized the destruction of private property.

A. I did; corps commanders were at all times authorized to destroy private property, where it fulfilled any military uses, and the commanders of all detachments.

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Q. I will now repeat the question I asked you, and that is whether at any time in your march through South Carolina, you authorized the destruction of private property; and if so, in what instances and for what purposes?

A. I required the destruction of all railways, depots, foundries, and arsenals; I generally, in person, saw that they were so destroyed; I never gave an order for the destruction of a private dwelling, more especially if it were occupied by a family.

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Q. Were you at any time before crossing the Savannah river, or before reaching Columbia, aware of a strong spirit of vengeance—a desire for vengeance—animating your troops to be wreaked upon South Carolina?

A. I was; the feeling was universal, and pervaded all ranks.

Q. Officers and all?

A. Officers and all; we looked upon South Carolina as the cause of our woes.

Q. And thought that she thoroughly deserved severe treatment?

A. Yes, sir; that she thoroughly deserved extirpation.

* * * * * * *

Q. Did you see any stores along Main street being broken into?

A. No, sir, I did not; Main street was crowded full of negroes, escaped prisoners, and officers of our army who had been imprisoned there, but who had succeeded in making their escape; there must have been 300 there; I met the mayor, Dr. Goodwyn, there, an old gentleman; I was still mounted, and he came up to my horse, and we had a conversation about one thing and another; and afterwards, on a second meeting, he told me which house he had selected for my occupation, namely, the house of Blanton Duncan, on a street at right angles with this main street and removed from it, I should suppose about one thousand yards.

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Q. You have stated to me that there was a general feeling through the army, pervading all ranks of a desire to wreak

vengeance—to extirpate, if I may be permitted to use your own words, South Carolina?

A. There was.

Q. Was that feeling shared in by your superior officers?

A. Not at all, unless it may be inferred from a paragraph in a letter of General Halleck to me, which was published—published in the official documents—in which he said in case I took Charleston he hoped I would sow salt upon it, so that it would never resurrect; that is the only paragraph I can recall in any letter of instruction or communication to me during the time I was in Savannah or before.

Q. What was your reply?

A. My reply was, that if we took Charleston I supposed there would be very little left of it when we got through with it, but I did not intimate that I was going to Charleston, because I had made up my mind what course to pursue before that time; still my letter is a public letter, and is of record; it has been printed, I suppose; I can find it if you desire it.

Counsel. I am not particularly anxious to see the letter, if you can give me the substance of your reply.

Witness. I refer to the testimony given by me before the committee on the conduct of the war, in which I extract many of my own letters.

I think I used the language in a letter to General Halleck.

(Witness looked over a printed volume.)

I am now trying to see if I can find it. My language is:

"I will bear in mind your hint as to Charleston, and don't think salt will be necessary. When I move the 15th corps will be on the right of the right wing, and their position will bring them naturally into Charleston first, and if you have watched the history of that corps, you will have remarked that they generally do their work up pretty well. The truth is, the whole army is burning with an insatiable desire to wreak vengeance upon South Carolina. I almost tremble at her fate, but feel that she deserves all that seems in store for her. Many and many a person in Georgia asked me why we did not go to South Carolina, and when I answered that I was en route

for that State, the invariable reply was, 'Well, if you will make those people feel the severities of war, we will pardon you for your desolation of Georgia.'

"I look upon Columbia as quite as bad as Charleston, and I doubt if we shall spare the public buildings there, as we did at Milledgeville."

* * * * * * *

Q. You feel a great interest in the question of the burning of Columbia, do you not?

A. I do.

Q Far beyond the value of money?

A. The value of money is nothing compared with the elucidation of the historic truth.

Q. You felt as soon as you saw the first signs of a general conflagration in Columbia that the authorship of it would be visited upon you?

A. Certainly; I knew I would be held responsible for it by everybody.

Q. And as a matter of deep personal interest to yourself, you are glad to testify today?

A. Perfectly so; it is my pleasure to testify at any time on that subject or any other, especially on this.

Q. You have, therefore, a warm personal interest in this question?

A. I have.

Q. And in vindicating yourself and the United States forces from the charges which have been and which you knew would be brought against you?

A. If I had made up my mind to burn Columbia I would have burnt it with no more feeling than I would a common prairie dog village; but I did not do it, and I therefore want that truth to be manifested; that is the interest I have in it; it is not a question of houses, of property, or anything of the kind.

Q. And you feel an interest in vindicating your army from the charge?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. You told me some time ago that you know in no way of

houses being set fire to by individuals in Columbia during the night of the 17th of February, 1865?

A. I saw no soldier engaged in any act of conflagration except this young man who appeared to be drunk and running about, suspecting that he was engaged in some mischief—

Q. You did see one?

A. He was behaving badly; he was the man whom my aide-de-camp shot and brought to; I saw no soldier engaged in any act of incendiarism that night.

Q. Do you know of any individual firing private property on the night of the 17th of February?

A. I do not; he should certainly have been summarily dealt with.

Q. Do you not believe—I do not want what people told you—but do you not believe that individuals assisted in spreading that conflagration?

A. My own judgment was that the fire originated from the imprudent act of Wade Hampton in ripping open the bales of that cotton, piling it on the streets, burning it, and then going away, that God Almighty started wind sufficient to carry that cotton wherever he would, and in some way or other that burning cotton was the origin of the fire; after the fire began, I have heard it intimated that some of our soldiers were engaged in spreading it; that is the answer to the question; my belief is, some soldiers, after the fire originated, may have been concerned in spreading it, but not concerned at all in starting it.

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Q. You have given us your suppositions in regard to the origin of this fire; although you personally may not have ordered the burning of the city, would it surprise you if it could be proven to you that your army actually did it?

A. It would surprise me very much indeed if any officer, Howard, Logan, Woods, or any commissioned officer was privy to the setting fire to any house in Columbia that night, but it would not surprise me if some vagabond did it without orders, and merely for deviltry; it would not surprise me if some of our escaped prisoners, or some of our own soldiers, aided in

spreading the flames; I would be perfectly prepared to believe it if the evidence w s spread before me that some one or more of our soldiers—because in an army of that size we had men capable of doing anything—might have assisted in the work of destruction; that it was concealed by their fellows: but that any of my officers had a hand in it, either directly or indirectly, I do not, and will not believe.

Q. If I were to submit to you now the testimony of some individuals in South Carolina, whose integrity you have no doubt of, that they witnessed the firing by Federal soldiers in the presence of officers?

A. Well, they would have to state the names of the officers, and if the officers denied it, I would accept their denial rather than any evidence of people in South Carolina; if the officers present were mentioned by name, or anything by which we could trace them down—say the officer of the guard at a certain point—then I would believe it; I would not, upon the mere say so, or even the oath of any person in Columbia that night, when he would state that he saw a fire kindled in a house, or in a shed, whereby it spread to the adjoining property, I would not believe it, unless it were confirmed by some of my own people.

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Q. On the 17th and 18th of February, 1865, who was empowered to order the destruction of cotton, or other property in Columbia.

A. First myself, and next the commanders of the two wings, Howard and Slocum; next the commanders of the four corps; then the commanding officer of any detachment sent out from the main body, to whom was committed the destruction of any property from the necessity of the case.

Q. I meant to limit my question to property in the city of Columbia?

A. First myself; then General Howard, General Logan, and General Chas. R. Woods; no one else.

Q. If soldiers, or subordinate officers without orders from those you have named, destroyed property in Columbia on the night of the 17th February, it was unauthorized?

A. Yes, sir; I do not think it was done except by detachments sent out for the purpose with orders.

Q. You have stated that you now feel a personal responsibility in regard to this matter; did you feel that personal responsibility on the night of the 17th of February, when you first saw on the wall of your room the light of the fire?

A. I did.

Q. What effect had it on you then and during the rest of the night?

A. To do my duty to prevent the extension of that fire, so as not to disturb the families of people living in Columbia, the quiet inhabitants of the place, and to prevent the usual clamor where a city was burnt, as in Pennsylvania.

W. T. SHERMAN, General.

GENERAL SHERMAN AND GENERAL LEE.

What Sherman practiced in his march through Georgia and South Carolina in 1864–65, he preached as early as 1863. In a letter to General Halleck, dated September 17th, 1863, he says that "we (the army) will, if need be, take every life, every acre of land, every particle of property, every thing that to us seems proper," and that he would keep up war, pure and simple, and make the southern people "so sick of war that generations would pass away before they would again appeal to it." This is in the same vein as the declaration, a year later, that he would "make Georgia howl," and that the Fifteenth Corps does its work well.

A simple perusal of the letters of Sherman, published by himself, will show that such crimes as the burning of Columbia were, in his view, legitimate and proper acts of war. But against this we can set the opinion of a better soldier and better man than Sherman, whose judgment was as cool and dispassionate in things which came home to him and his people as in things with which he and his had no personal concern. When General Lee visited this State, not long before his death, a gentleman who knew him well asked his opinion of Sherman's conduct. This, it must be remembered, was several years after the war, when there were the same means that there are now of forming a true judgment. What passed is given as follows:

D. H. "General Lee, I desire to ask a question, which you will please not reply to if there is any impropriety in it."

General Lee. "Ask it, sir."

D. H. "Was General Sherman in his march through the country justified, under the usages of war, in burning our homes over the heads of our women and children while we were in the field?"

General Lee arose from his chair with his eyes brightened and said: "No, sir! no, sir! It was the act of a savage. He was not justified under the usages of war."

This we have from the lips of the general to whom General

Lee said these words. They are worthy of note, and the phrase that General Lee used in speaking of Sherman will be remembered to Sherman's shame when every other bitterness of the war is forgotten: "It was the act of a savage!"

LETTER OF JAMES WOOD DAVIDSON.

The New York World publishes the following article written by Mr. James Wood Davidson, of Columbia, who is engaged in journalism in New York:

The publication of his "Memoirs" by General Sherman makes for the third time an occasion for the country to ask, Who burned Columbia? The first occasion was the publication of his official report just after the event; and the second was in September, 1873, when he published a letter in the Washington Chronicle, apparently designed to influence the decision of the Mixed Claims Commission.

In his "Memoirs" just published General Sherman uses this language concerning the burning of the capital of South Carolina: "Many of the people think this fire was deliberately planned and executed. This is not true. It was accidental, and in my judgment began from cotton which General Hampton's men had set fire to on leaving the city (whether by his order or not is not material), which fire was partially subdued early in the day; but when night came the high wind fanned it again into full blaze, carried it against the frame buildings, which caught like tinder, and soon spread beyond our control."

In his letter to the Washington Chronicle in 1873 General Sherman says: "I reiterate that, no matter what his (General Hampton's) orders were, the men of his army, either his rear guard or his stragglers, did apply the fire, and that this was a sufficient cause for all else that followed." By "all else," of course, General Sherman means the destruction of the city.

In his official report of the event itself in 1865 General Sherman says: "And without hesitation I charge General Wade Hampton with having burned his own city of Columbia, not with a malicious intent, or as the manifestation of a Roman stoicism, but from folly and want of sense in filling it with lint cotton and tinder."

I have thus given in his own words General Sherman's three statements of his version of the story of Columbia's burning.

They show a toning down as we come on from 1865 to 1873, and finally to 1875, but this discrepancy is not the matter before me just now. The general idea of the three statements is that the burning of Columbia was an accident.

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Sixth. Adjutant S. H M. Byers, in a pamphlet entitled "What I Saw in Dixie, or Sixteen Months in Rebel Prisons," says: "The boys, too, were spreading the conflagration by firing the city in a hundred places." The "boys" seem to have done that night exactly as General Sherman told General Halleck they generally did, that is, "do their work up pretty well"; for no one should complain of a hundred separate applications of the incendiary torch as not being "pretty well" in its way.

Seventh. Mr. Whitelaw Reid's "Ohio in the War" says of this destruction of Columbia: "It was the most monstrous barbarity of the barbarous march." This opinion bears upon the character of the act, not upon the question of who did it.

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Twelfth. The following towns and villages in South Carolina in some of which at least there was no cotton in the streets, were burned either in whole or in part during the same campaign: Robertsville, Grahamville, McPhersonville, Barnwell, Blackville, Orangeburg, Lexington, Winnsboro, Camden, Lancaster, Chesterfield, Cheraw and Darlington.

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LETTER OF AUGUST CONRAD.

Mr. August Conrad (Felix Clacius) having in his "Lights and Shadows of American Life During the War of Secession" described the occupation and the sack of Columbia, by the United States troops, gives an account of the horrible acts that followed:

Night with her sable pall covered Columbia usually so quiet and peaceable, but tonight full of tumult and disorder. Night came on for the evil foe, who was laboring with many thousand busy hands at her destruction. Night was unwelcome to the unfortunate people who looked to the near future in anxiety and distress. There was rest and recuperation for no one this night.

As it was getting dark the soldiers camped in the streets and made fire to cook their supper. I spoke to the Captain quartered in our house, representing the danger of this course—so much cotton lying near. and many other easily inflammable substances. I had for my trouble my pains. The Captain sneeringly asked me what I had to do with the soldiers? whether I had a kitchen where they could prepare their meals? I said no more. I could not afford to offend this man, who still had a spark of decency and authority. I invited him and the two Lieutenants to partake of our frugal supper. But before it was ready a new event attracted our attention. A mighty pillar of fire and smoke arose at some distance. One of the railroad depots situated at the lower end of the city was burning, and the cotton stored there furnished ample food for the flames. But in the excitement of the hour it made little or no impression till flames were seen in the opposite direction also; and, when a few minutes afterwards a house standing next to ours was burning, the conviction began to dawn on us that the firing of the city was premeditated, its extent incalculable; and this thought filled us with dismay.

When we noticed that the enemy made not the slightest effort to extinguish the flames, but rather seemed to enjoy the

sight, we were confirmed in our suspicions that the fire had been set. But I do not to this day know whether the fire set by this rabble had been ordered or only suffered by the military authorities.

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The satanic horde plundered and destroyed within the houses and upon the streets. Pandemonium let loose is but a faint image of what was transpiring here before my eyes.

Heartrending cries of distress were heard amid this tumult from persons robbed or otherwise molested, or from people threatened by the fire. Here and there you would see unfortunates, with little children upon their arms, or with some few valuables or necessaries, running from these human devils and from the fire, looking for safety, but only to find fresh misery and destruction in the place they had thought safe.

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EXTRACTS FROM SOUTHERN HISTORICAL SOCIETY PAPERS.

Letter from General Hampton on the Burning of Columbia.

We propose at some future day to publish in full the facts concerning the burning of Columbia, and to fix beyond all controversy the responsibility for that outrage upon the laws of civilized warfare. But in the meantime we put on record the following letter which Gen. Wade Hampton addressed to Senator Reverdy Johnson, and which he read in the United States Senate at the time:

WILD WOODS, MISSISSIPPI, April 21, 1866.

To Hon. Reverdy Johnson, United States Senate:

Sir: A few days ago I saw in the published proceedings of Congress that a petition from Benjamin Kawles, of Columbia, South Carolina, asking compensation for the destruction of his house by the Federal army in February, 1865, had been presented to the Senate, accompanied by a letter from Major-General Sherman.

In this letter General Sherman uses the following language:

"The citizens of Columbia set fire to thousands of bales of cotton rolled out into the streets, and which were burning before we entered Columbia. I, myself, was in the city as early as 9 o'clock, and I saw these fires, and knew that efforts were made to extinguish them, but a high and strong wind kept them alive.

"I gave no orders for the burning of your city, but, on the contrary, the conflagration resulted from the great imprudence of cutting the cotton bales, whereby the contents were spread to the wind, so that it became an impossibility to arrest the fire.

"I saw in your Columbia newspaper the printed order of Gen. Wade Hampton, that on the approach of the Yankee

army all the cotton should thus be burned, and from what I saw myself I have no hesitation in saying that he was the cause of the destruction of your city."

This same charge, made against me by General Sherman, having been brought before the Senate of the United States, I am naturally most solicitous to vindicate myself before the same tribunal. But my State has no representative in that body. Those who should be her constitutional representatives and exponents there, are debarred the right of entrance into those halls. There are none who have the right to speak for the South; none to participate in the legislation which governs her; none to impose the taxes she is called upon to pay, and none to vindicate her sons from misrepresentation, injustice or slander.

Under these circumstances I appeal to you, in the confident hope that you will use every effort to see that justice is done in this matter.

I deny, emphatically, that any cotton was fired in Columbia by my order.

I deny that the citizens "set fire to thousands of bales rolled out into the streets."

I deny that any cotton was on fire when the Federal troops entered the city.

I most respectfully ask of Congress to appoint a committee, charged with the duty of ascertaining and reporting all the facts connected with the destruction of Columbia, and thus fixing upon the proper author of that enormous crime the infamy he richly deserves.

I am willing to submit the case to any honest tribunal. Before any such I pledge myself to prove that I gave a positive order, by direction of General Beauregard, that no cotton should be fired; that not one bale was on fire when General Sherman's troops took possession of the city; that he promised protection to the city, and that, in spite of his solemn promise, he burned the city to the ground, deliberately, systematically and atrociously.

I, therefore, most earnestly request that Congress may take prompt and efficient measures to investigate this matter fully.

Not only is this due to themselves and to the reputation of the United States army, but also to justice and truth.

Trusting that you will pardon me for troubling you,

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WADE HAMPTON.

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Times have changed since 1866. General Sherman, in his Memoirs published in 1875, maintains that Columbia was burned by accident and not by design, and makes this most remarkable admission [Memoirs, volume II, page 287]: "In my official report of this conflagration I distinctly charged it to Gen. Wade Hampton, and confess I did so pointedly to shake the faith of his people in him, for he was in my opinion a braggart, and professed to be the special champion of South Carolina."

In other words General Sherman coolly admits that he deliberately made in his official report a false charge against a soldier opposed to him in order to injure him with his own people. We expect at the proper time to show that this admission is fatal to some other statements made by "the General of the Army."

But, fortunately, the character of Wade Hampton was always above reproach, and now, after a career which has made him the idol of his people and the admiration of the world, he goes to take his seat on the floor of that Senate, which, in '66, denied him the simplest justice.

General Sherman's Latest Story Examined.

The following is taken from the Charleston News and Courier of June 15th, 1881:

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In the Memoirs of Gen. Wm. T. Sherman, by himself, (page 226) we find a dispatch of General Sherman to Gen. W. H. Halleck, dated headquarters in the field, Savannah, December 24, 1864. It is given in full. General Sherman says:

"This war differs from European wars in this particular: We are not only fighting hostile armies, but a hostile people, and must make old and young, rich and poor, feel the hard

hand of war, as well as their organized armies. I know that this recent movement of mine through Georgia has had a wonderful effect in this respect. Thousands who had been deceived by their lying newspapers to believe that we were being whipped all the time now realize the truth, and have no appetite for a repetition of the same experience. To be sure Jeff Davis has his people under pretty good discipline, but I think faith in him is much shaken in Georgia, and before we have done with her, South Carolina will not be quite so tempestuous.

"I will bear in mind your hint as to Charleston, and do not think it will be necessary. When I move the Fifteenth Corps will be on the right of the right wing, and their position will bring them into Charleston first; and if you have watched the history of the corps, you will have remarked that they generally do their work pretty well. The truth is, the whole army is burning with insatiable desire to wreak vengeance upon South Carolina. I almost tremble at her fate; but feel that she deserves all that seems in store for her."

This is susceptible of but one meaning: That General Halleck had hinted that Charleston should be laid in ashes, and the ruins sowed in salt. Sherman avows that he was ready for this, and that nothing was too bad for South Carolina. But for what follows, it might have been urged that Charleston was especially singled out as the scapegoat of the State. In the very same letter from which we have quoted, Sherman says: "I look upon Columbia as quite as bad as Charleston." Mark Sherman's words, and the wholesale destruction of property in South Carolina. Join to this the fact that it was the Fifteenth Corps that entered Columbia and occupied it. Can it be doubted for a moment that the corps again did its work "pretty well," and that Sherman acted upon the feeling, which animated him from the moment that he crossed the State line, that South Carolina deserved all that was in store for her, by reason of his own wishes and the insatiable desire of his troops for vengeance!

General Sherman forgets—or he says what is untrue. We are constrained to believe that he wilfully misstates the facts.

This, we believe, because he has done it before. In his Memoirs (page 287) and, in substance, in his Hartford speech, General Sherman says that the fire, which destroyed Columbia, was "accidental." On the same page he says: "In my official report of this conflagration I distinctly charged it to Gen. Wade Hampton, and confess I did so pointedly, to shake the faith of his people in him, for he was, in my opinion, a braggart, and professed to be the special champion of South Carolina." Knowing, by his own account, that the fire was accidental, Gen. Sherman charged it on General Hampton—not because he believed him to be guilty, but to shake confidence in him. Even our Northern brethren, or some of them, will reluctantly admit that a commanding general who will boast that he accused an opponent of a crime of which he knew him to be innocent is capable, at this late day, of lying squarely to gratify his spite and save himself from blame.

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One Truthful James in Sherman's Army.

COLUMBIA, S. C., October 25.

There was one truthful man in Sherman's army, and Senator Hampton has discovered him. The Senator has handed the News and Courier bureau here the following fragment of an article in the Fulton Signal, of Canal Fulton, Ohio, edited and published by J. P. Yockey.

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY J. P. ZELLERS AT THE ANNUAL REUNION OF HIS REGIMENT, 76TH, O. V. I., AT NEWARK, O.

"My capture, imprisonment, release and return home will be the theme of my address.

"Every American citizen is familiar with Sherman's famous march to the sea, and all will agree that its success broke the backbone of secession.

"Arriving at Savannah on the 20th day of December, 1864, the hero of this world renowned campaign gave us a few week's rest. This hero soon became restless, and perching himself upon an elevated spot, cried: 'Attention creation. By kingdoms, forward march.' And we did. Little did we think,

however, that our march was 'on to Richmond.' The first important act of this campaign was the seige and capture of Columbia, South Carolina—the place where secession was born, bred and mothered, and every patriot of that brave band swore that not one stone should remain on the other in that beautiful city, and the promise was well carried out."

This precious extract is commended to the attention of the arch incendiary, Tecumseh Sherman.

Extracts from a Reply to the Charge of the New York Tribune that Hampton Burned Columbia.

* * * * * * *

In a letter published in the proceedings of Congress about April, 1866, General Sherman says: "The citizens of Columbia set fire to thousands of bales of cotton rolled out into the streets, and which were burning before we entered Columbia. I myself was in the city as early as 9 o'clock, and I saw these fires."

The general accusation, it is seen, is here transferred from Hampton to the citizens of Columbia; but the inquiry is now as to the facts in regard to the burning cotton—thousands of bales of which General Sherman says he saw, and which he adds, had been burning at least twelve hours before any soldiers belonging to my army had gotten within the limits of the city." Where were these burning bales? In an affidavit made by General Sherman in 1872 he swears: "Col. Stone's brigade were crossed [over the river] on the night of the 16th and 17th of February, and were the first troops to enter Columbia." This Col. Stone was Brevet Brig. Gen. George A. Stone, of Iowa, who in a letter to the Chicago Tribune, which was published in January, 1873, testifies that soon after its entrance "the entire brigade was distributed through the city," and adds:

"Up to this time no fires occurred in any part of the city save those of public buildings and quartermasters' stores, fired by the enemy the day before we entered, I think, but which fires had not extended and did not extend to any other part of the city. The streets in some places contained bales of cotton,

which had been cut open, and these caught fire twice or three times during the day, but these fires had been promptly put out by some of the firemen, aided by a detail of soldiers under charge of an officer."

General Stone was in charge of the whole city, as his command was assigned to provost duty, yet he saw no smouldering fires where General Sherman saw thousands! This disposes of the cotton theory; but General Stone goes farther and tells who did burn the city. He says:

Col. D. J. Palmer, commanding my regiment, the 75th Iowa, and to whom I had entrusted the charge of the most dangerous part of the city, confirmed my opinion that there was a plot to burn the city by telling me several fires had started in his district; that he had succeeded in putting them out so far, but could not hold out much longer, and that, in his opinion, the next one would fire the city. The wind after sunset had increased in violence, and about 9 o'clock was blowing almost a hurricane from Colonel Palmer's district right towards the heart of the city. All at once fifteen or twenty flames, from as many different places along the river shot up, and in ten minutes the fate of Columbia was settled." * * * "The next morning it was discovered the guard had been too small; and although a square mile of the heart of the city had been eaten out, and the men's appetite for revenge satiated, yet it was then considered that a division of troops was necessary for provost duty."

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In a "Narrative of Military Service," which he published a few years ago, Gen. W. B. Hazen says: "I have never doubted that Columbia was deliberately set on fire in more than a hundred places."

In his "Memoirs," (page 288), General Sherman says: "Having utterly ruined Columbia, the right wing began its march northwest to Winnsboro on the 20th;" and Winnsboro was likewise "utterly ruined"—burnt—the next day.

* * * * * * *

BURNING OF COLUMBIA.

Copy of the Letter of Dr. T. J. Goodwyn, Mayor of Columbia, to Maj. Gen. Wm. T. Sherman.

MAYOR'S OFFICE,
COLUMBIA, S. C., February 17, 1865.

To Maj. Gen. Sherman:

The Confederate forces having evacuated Columbia, I deem it my duty, as Mayor and representative of the city, to ask for its citizens the treatment accorded by the usages of civilized warfare.

I, therefore, respectfully request that you will give a sufficient guard, in advance of the army, to maintain order in the city, and protect the persons and property of the citizens.

Very respectfully,
T. J. GOODWYN, Mayor.

A public meeting of the citizens of Columbia was called, April 22d, 1867, at Carolina Hall, at which Hon. E. J. Arthur presided. A committee was appointed to collect evidence as to the burning of the city on the night of February 17, 1865. The names of the committee are as follows:

Chancellor J. P. Carroll, Chairman, Hon. Wm. F. de Saussure, Hon. E. J. Arthur, Dr. John Fisher, Dr. Wm. Reynolds, Dr. D. H. Trezevant, Dr. A. N. Talley, Prof. W. J. Rivers, Prof. John LeConte, Col J. T. Sloan, Col, L. D. Childs.

The committee decided to accept only the testimony of those who could make sworn affidavits as to the events of which they were eye-witnesses. As stated in the subjoined Report, more than sixty (60) depositions and statements in writing, from as many individuals, were placed in the hands of the committee, from which the following Report was compiled.

* * * * * * *

S. P. C.

Report of the Committee Appointed to Collect Testimony in Relation to the Destruction of Columbia, S. C., on the 17th of February, 1865.

The committee who were charged with the duty of collecting the evidence in relation to the destruction of Columbia by fire, on the 17th of February, 1865, submit the following report:

By the terms of the resolution appointing them, the committee do not feel authorized to deduce any conclusion, or pronounce any judgment, however warranted by the proof, as to the person responsible for the crime. Their task will be accomplished by presenting the evidence that has been obtained, with an abstract of the facts established by it.

More than sixty depositions and statements in writing, from as many individuals, have been placed in the hands of the committee. The array of witnesses is impressive, not merely because of their number, but for the high-toned and elevated character of some of them, the unpretending and sterling probity of others, and the general intelligence and worth of all. The plain and unvarnished narrative subjoined is taken from the testimony referred to, solely and exclusively, except so much as refers to certain declarations of General Sherman himself, widely circulated through the public press, and to the ravages of his army in this State, after their departure from Columbia: matters of such notoriety as, in the judgment of the committee, to dispense with the necessity of formal proof.

The forces of General Sherman's command while in Georgia seem to have anticipated that their next march would be through South Carolina. Their temper and feeling towards our people, a witness, Mrs. L. Catharine Joyner, thus describes: "The soldiers were universal in their threats. They seemed to gloat over the distress that would accrue from their march through the State. I conversed with numbers of all grades, belonging to the Fourteenth and Twentieth Corps. Such expressions as the following were of hourly occurrence: 'Carolina may well dread us. She brought this war on, and shall pay the penalty. You think Georgia has suffered, just wait until we get into Carolina; every man, woman and child may

dread us there.'" Of General Sherman himself, the same witness informs us that, addressing himself to a lady of his acquaintance, he said to her: "Go off the line of railroad, for I will not answer for the consequences where the army passes."

The threats uttered in Georgia were sternly executed by the troops of General Sherman upon their entrance into the State. For eighty miles along the route of his army, through the most highly improved and cultivated region of the State, according to the testimony of intelligent and respectable witnesses, the habitations of but two white persons remain. As he advanced, the villages of Hardeeville, Grahamville, Gillisonville, McPhersonville, Barnwell, Blackville, Midway, Orangeburg and Lexington were successively devoted to the flames. Indignities and outrages were perpetrated upon the persons of the inhabitants. The implements of agriculture were broken; dwellings, barns, mills, gin-houses, were consumed; provisions of every description appropriated or destroyed; horses and mules carried away; and sheep, cattle and hogs were either taken for actual use, or shot down and left behind. The like devastations marked the progress of the invading army from Columbia through this State to its Northern frontier, and the towns of Winnsboro, Camden and Cheraw suffered from like visitations by fire. If a single town or village or hamlet within their line of march escaped altogether the torch of the invaders, the committee have not been informed of the exception. The line of General Sherman's march, from his entering the territory of the State up to Columbia, and from Columbia to the North Carolina border, was one continuous track of fire.

The devastation and ruin thus inflicted were but the execution of the policy and plan of General Sherman for the subjugation of the Confederate States. Extracts from his address at Salem, Illinois, in July last, have appeared in the public prints, and thus he announces and vindicates the policy and plan referred to: "We were strung out from Nashville clear down to Atlanta. Had I then gone on stringing out our forces, what danger would there not have been of their attacking the little head of the column and crushing it. Therefore, I resolved in a moment to stop the game of guarding their cities, and to

destroy their cities. We were determined to produce results, and, now, what were those results? To make every man, woman and child in the South feel that. if they dared to rebel against the flag of their country, they must die or submit." The plan of subjugation adopted by General Sherman was fully comprehended and approved by his army. His officers and men universally justified their acts by declaring that it was "the way to put down the rebellion, by burning and destroying everything."

Before the surrender of our town, the soldiers of General Sherman, officers and privates, declared that it was to be destroyed. "It was," deposes a witness, Mrs. Rosa J. Meetze, "the common talk among them, at the village of Lexington, that Columbia, was to be burned by General Sherman." At the same place, on the 16th of February, 865. as deposed to by another witness, Mrs. Francis T. Caughman, "the general officer in command of his cavalry forces, General Kilpatrick, said, in reference to Columbia: 'Sherman will lay it in ashes for them.'" "It was the general impression among all the prisoners we captured," says a Confederate officer, Captain J. P. Austin of the Ninth Kentucky Reg. Cavalry, "that Columbia was to be destroyed." On the morning of the same day, February 16th, 1865, some of the forces of General Sherman appeared on the western side of the river, and, without a demand of surrender, or any previous notice of their purpose, began to shell the town, then filled with women, children and aged persons, and continued to do so at intervals throughout the day. The Confederate forces were withdrawn, and the town restored to the control of the municipal authorities, on the morning of the 17th of February. Accompanied by three of the Aldermen, the Mayor, between eight and nine o'clock A. M., proceeded in the direction of Broad river, for the purpose of surrendering the city to General Sherman. Acting in concert with the Mayor, the officer in command of the rear guard of the Confederate cavalry, General M. C. Butler, forbore from further resistence to the advance of the opposing army, and took effectual precautions against anything being done which might provoke General Sherman or his troops to

acts of violence or severity towards the town or its citizens. The surrender of Columbia was made by the Mayor and Aldermen to the first general officer of the hostile army whom they met; and that officer promised protection to the town and its inhabitants until communication could be had with General Sherman, and the terms of surrender arranged.

By eleven o'clock A. M. the town was in possession of the Federal forces, the first detachment entering being the command of the officer who had received the surrender. They had scarcely marched into the town, however, before they began to break into the stores of the merchants, appropriating the contents or throwing them in the streets and destroying them. As other bodies of troops came in, the pillage grew more general, and soon the sack of the town was universal. Guards were, in general, sent to those of the citizens who applied for them, but in numerous instances they proved to be unable or unwilling to perform the duty assigned them. Scarcely a single household or family escaped altogether from being plundered. The streets of the town were densely filled with thousands of Federal soldiers, drinking, shouting, carousing, and robbing the defenceless inhabitants, without reprimand or check from their officers; and this state of things continued until night. In some instances guards were refused. Papers and property of great value were in the vaults of one of the city banks, while the apartments above and in the rear were occupied by women and children with their food and clothing. For a guard to protect them, application was made by one of our worthiest and most respectable citizens, Edwin J. Scott, Esq., first to the general officer, who had received the surrender of the town, Colonel Stone, and then to the Provost Marshal, Major Jenkins. The response made to the applicant by the former officer, though standing idle in the crowd, was that he "had no time to attend to him," and the answer of the latter was, "I cannot undertake to protect private property." Between two and three o'clock P. M., General Sherman in person rode into Columbia, informed the Mayor that his letter had been received, and promised protection to the town. Extraordinary license was allowed to his soldiers by General Sherman. In the afternoon

of the 17th of February, 1865, and shortly after his arrival in Columbia, the Mayor of the town, at the request of General Sherman, accompanied him on a visit to a lady of his acquaintance. While proceeding to her residence, General Sherman began to express his opinion very freely upon the subject of our institution of slavery. In the midst of his remarks he was interrupted by the sudden and near report of a musket. Immediately before them, in the direction they were going, they observed a group of Federal soldiers seeming to be excited, and upon approaching they saw a negro lying dead directly in their path, being shot through the heart. "General Sherman (the Mayor, Dr. T. J. Goodwyn, narrates) asked of the soldiers: 'How came the negro shot?' And was answered that the negro had been guilty of great insolence to them, and that thereupon General Sherman remarked: 'Stop this, boys. This is all wrong Take away the body and bury it.' General Sherman," continues the Mayor, "then stepped over the body of the negro, and observing to the deponent that 'in quiet times such a thing ought to be noticed, but in times like this it could not be done,' General Sherman resumed his conversation in relation to slavery, and no arrest was ordered or any censure or reprimand uttered by him, except as above stated. About sundown," as the Mayor deposes, "General Sherman said to him: 'Go home, and rest assured that your city will be as safe in my hands as if you had controlled it.'" He added, that he was compelled to burn some of the public buildings, and in so doing did not wish to destroy one particle of private property. This evening," he said, "was too windy to do anything." An esteemed clergyman, Rev. A. Toomer Porter, testifies that the same afternoon, between six and seven o'clock, General Sherman said to him: "You must know a great many ladies—go around and tell them to go to bed quietly; they will not be disturbed any more than if my army was one hundred miles off. He seemed oblivious of the fact that we had been pillaged and insulted the whole day. In one hour's time the city was in flames."

Meanwhile the soldiers of General Sherman had burned, that afternoon, many houses in the environs of the town, including

the dwelling of General Hampton, with that of his sisters, formerly the residence of their father, and once the seat of genial and princely hospitality. Throughout the day, after they had marched into the town, the soldiers of General Sherman gave distinct and frequent notice to the citizens of the impending calamity, usually in the form of fierce and direct threats, but occasionally as if in kindly forewarning. A lady of rare worth and intelligence, and of high social position, Mrs. L. S. McCord, relates the following incident: "One of my maids brought me a paper, left, she told me, by a Yankee soldier; it was an ill-spelled, but kindly warning of the horrors to come, written upon a torn sheet of my dead son's note book, which, with private papers of every kind, now strewed my yard. It was signed by a Lieutenant—of what company and regiment, I did not take note. The writer said he had relatives and friends at the South, and that he felt for us; that his heart bled to think of what was threatening. 'Ladies,' he wrote, 'I pity you. Leave this town—go anywhere to be safer than here.' This was written in the morning, the fires were in the evening and night." One of our citizens of great intelligence and respectability, William H. Orchard, was visited about 7 P. M. by a squad of some six or seven soldiers, to whose depredations he submitted with a composure that seemed to impress their leader. Of his conversation with this person, the gentleman referred to testifies as follows: "On leaving the yard he called to me, and said he wished to speak to me alone. He then said to me in an undertone: 'You seem to be a clever sort of a man, and have a large family, so I will give you some advice: If you have anything you wish to save, take care of it at once, for before morning this d——d town will be in ashes—every house in it.' My only reply was: can that be true? He said, 'yes, and if you do not believe me you will be the sufferer; if you watch you will see three rockets go up soon, and if you do not take my advice you will see h—ll.'" Within an hour afterwards, three rockets were seen to ascend from a point in front of the Mayor's dwelling. But a few minutes elapsed before fires, in swift succession broke out, and at intervals so distant that they could not have been

communicated from the one to the other. At various parts of the town, the soldiers of General Sherman, at the appearance of the rockets, declared that they were the appointed signal for a general conflagration. The fire companies, with their engines, promptly repaired to the scene of the fires, and endeavored to arrest them, but in vain. The soldiers of General Sherman, with bayonets and axes, pierced and cut the hose, disabled the engines and prevented the citizens from extinguishing the flames. The wind was high and blew from the west. The fires spread and advanced with fearful rapidity, and soon enveloped the very heart of the town. The pillage began upon the entrance of the hostile forces, continued without cessation or abatement, and now the town was delivered up to the accumulated horrors of sack and conflagration. The inhabitants were subjected to personal indignities and outrages. A witness, Captain W. B. Stanley, testifies that several times during the night, he saw the soldiers of General Sherman take from females bundles of clothing and provisions, open them, appropriate what they wanted and throw the remainder into the flames. Men were violently seized and threatened with the halter or the pistol to compel them to disclose where their gold or silver was concealed.

The revered and beloved pastor of one of our churches, Rev. P. J. Shand, states that, in the midst and during the progress of the appalling calamity, above all other noises, might be heard the demoniac and gladsome shouts of the soldiery. Driven from his home by the flames, with the aid of a servant he was bearing off a trunk containing the communion plate of his church, his wife walking by his side, when he was surrounded by five of the soldiers, who requested him to put down the trunk and inform them of its contents—which was done. The sequel he thus narrates: "They then demanded the key, but, I not having it, they proceeded in efforts to break the lock. While four of them were thus engaged, the fifth seized me with his left hand by the collar, and, presenting a pistol to my breast with his right, he demanded of me my watch. I had it not about me, but he searched my pockets thoroughly, and then joined his comrades, who, finding it impracticable to force

open the lock, took up the trunk and carried it away. These men," he adds, "were all perfectly sober."

By 3 o'clock A. M., on the night of the 17th of February, 1865, more than two-thirds of the town lay in ashes, comprising the most highly improved, and the entire business portion. Thousands of the inhabitants, including women delicately reared, young children, the aged and the sick, passed that winter night in the open air, without shelter from the bitter and piercing blasts. About the hour mentioned (3 o'clock A. M.,) another highly esteemed clergyman, Rev. A. Toomer Porter, personally known to General Sherman, was at the corner of a street conversing with one of his officers on horseback, when General Sherman, in citizen's attire, walked up and accosted him. The interview is thus described: "In the bright light of the burning city, General Sherman recognized me, and remarked: 'This is a horrible sight!' Yes, I replied, when you reflect that women and children are the victims. He said: 'Your Governor is responsible for this.' How so? I replied. 'Whoever heard,' he said, 'of an evacuated city to be left a depot of liquor for an army to occupy? I found one hundred and twenty casks of whiskey in one cellar. Your Governor, being a lawyer or a judge, refused to have it destroyed, because it was private property, and now my men have got drunk and have got beyond my control, and this is the result' Perceiving the officer on horseback, he said: 'Captain Andrews, did I not order that this thing should be stopped?' 'Yes, General,' said the Captain, 'but the first division that came in soon got as drunk as the first regiment that occupied the town.' 'Then, sir,' said General Sherman, 'go and bring in the second division. I hold you personally responsible for its immediate cessation.' The officer darted off, and Sherman bade me good evening. I am sure it was not more than an hour and a half from the time that General Sherman gave his order that the city was cleared of the destroyers." From that time until the departure of General Sherman from Columbia (with perhaps one or two exceptions), not another dwelling in it was burned by his soldiers, and, during the succeeding days and nights of his occupation, per-

fect tranquility prevailed throughout the town. The discipline of his troops was perfect, the soldiers standing in great awe of their officers.

That Columbia was burned by the soldiers of General Sherman, that the vast majority of the incendiaries were sober, that for hours they were seen with combustibles firing house after house, without any affectation of concealment, and without the slightest check from their officers, is established by proof, full to repletion, and wearisome from its very superfluity. After the destruction of the town, his officers and men openly approved of its burning, and exulted in it "I saw," deposes the Mayor, "very few drunken soldiers that night; many who appeared to sympathize with our people told me that the fate and doom of Columbia had been common talk around their camp-fires ever since they left Savannah." It was said by numbers of the soldiers that the order had been given to burn down the city. There is strong evidence that such an order was actually issued in relation to the house of General John S. Preston. The Ursuline Convent was destroyed by fire, and the proof referred to comes from a revered and honored member of that holy Sisterhood, the Mother Superior, and it is subjoined in her own words: "Our convent was consumed in the general conflagration of Columbia. Ourselves and pupils were forced to fly, leaving provisions, clothing, and almost everything. We spent the night in the open air in the churchyard. On the following morning General Sherman made us a visit, expressed his regret at the burning of our convent, disclaimed the act, attributing it to the intoxication of his soldiers, and told me to choose any house in town for a convent, and it should be ours. He deputed his Adjutant-General, Colonel Ewing, to act in his stead. Colonel Ewing reminded us of General Sherman's offer to give us any house in Columbia we might choose for a convent. We have thought of it, said we, and of asking for General Preston's house, which is large. 'That is where General Logan holds his headquarters,' said he, 'and orders have already been given, I know, to burn it tomorrow morning; but, if you say you will take it for a convent I will speak to the General and the order will be countermanded.'

On the following morning, after many inquiries, we learned from the officer in charge (General Perry, I think,) that his orders were to fire it, unless the Sisters were in actual possession of it, but, if even a 'detachment of Sisters' were in it, it should be spared on their account. Accordingly, we took possession of it, although fires were already kindled near, and the servants were carrying off the bedding and furniture, in view of the house being consigned to the flames."

Although actual orders for the burning of the town may not have been given, the soldiers of General Sherman certainly believed that its destruction would not be displeasing to him. That such was their impression, we have the authority of a personage not less distinguished than the officer of highest rank in the army of invaders, next after the Commander-in-Chief himself. The proof is beyond impeachment. It comes from the honored pastor of one of our city churches, Rev. P. J. Shand, to whom reference has already been made, and it is thus expressed in his written statement, in the possession of the committee: "As well as I recollect in November, 1865, I went, in company with a friend, to see General Howard, at his headquarters in Charleston, on matters of business. Before we left, the conversation turned on the destruction of Columbia. General Howard expressed his regret at the occurrence, and added the following words: 'Though General Sherman did not order the burning of the town, yet some how or other, the men had taken up the idea that, if they destroyed the capital of South Carolina, it would be peculiarly gratifying to General Sherman.' These were his words, in the order in which I have set them forth. I noted them down as having great significancy, and they are as fresh in my remembrance as they were immediately after they were spoken. My friend (whose recollection accords fully with my own) and myself, on our way home, talked the matter over, and could not but be struck by the two following facts: First, that although General Howard said that General Sherman did not order the burning, he did not state that General Sherman gave orders that the city should not be burned. Second, that it was surprising, if General Sherman was opposed to the burning, that his oppo-

sition should have been so disguised as to lead to the conviction, on the part of his soldiery, that the act, so far from incurring his disapprobation or censure, would be a source to him of peculiar gratification."

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Of the suffering and distress of the individual inhabitants, some conception may be collected from the experience of one of them, Mrs. Agnes Law, a lady more venerable for her virtues even than for her age, whose narrative, almost entire, we venture to introduce: "I am seventy-two years old," she deposes, "and have lived in this town forty-eight years. My dwelling was a brick house, three stories, slate roof, with large gardens on two sides. When Columbia was burned, my sister was with me, also a niece of mine, recently confined, who had not yet ventured out of the house. When General Sherman took possession, I got four guards; they were well-behaved and sober men; I gave them supper. One lay down on the sofa, the others walked about. When the city began to burn, I wished to remove my furniture; they objected, and said my house was in no danger. Not long afterwards, these guards themselves took lighted candles from the mantel-piece and went up stairs; at the same time other soldiers crowded into the house. My sister followed them up stairs, but came down very soon to say: 'They are setting the curtains on fire.' Soon the whole house was in a blaze. When those who set fire up stairs came down, they said to me: 'Old woman, if you do not mean to burn up with your house, you had better get out of it.' My niece had been carried up to the Taylor House, on Arsenal Hill. I went to the door, to see if I could get any person I knew to assist me up there. I had been very sick. I could see no friend, only crowds of Federal soldiers. I was afraid I should fall in the street, and be burned up in the flames of the houses, blazing on both sides of the streets. I had to go alone I spent that night at the Taylor House, which a Federal officer said should not be burned, out of pity for my niece. The next two nights I passed in my garden, without any shelter. I have been for over fifty years a member of the Presbyterian church. I cannot live long. I shall

meet General Sherman and his soldiers at the Bar of God, and I give this testimony against them, in the full view of that dread tribunal."

The committee have designed, by the preceeding summary of the more prominent events and incidents connected with the destruction of Columbia, to present only an abstract of the numerous depositions and proofs in their possession. The proprieties imposed upon them by the very nature of the duties to which they have been assigned, have precluded their doing more. In the evidence thus collected may be read, in all its pathetic and heart-rending details, the story of the tragic fate that has befallen our once beautiful city, now in ashes and ruins.

Impressed with the historic value of the proofs referred to, and their importance to the cause of truth, and with a view to their preservation, the committee respectfully recommend: That they be committed to the guardianship of the municipal authorities, and be deposited with the archives of the town, trusting that, in after and better times, they will yet be found effectual, as well to vindicate the innocent as to confound the guilty.

J. P. CARROLL, Chairman.

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